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COOPERATIVE COMMUNITIES AT WORK

GRAMASEVAKS TRAINING CENTRE
22 FEB 1955
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FOREWORD

From time immemorial men have dreamed of establishing a society in which every warm human heart could take joy – a community of peace, brotherhood, and new liberty of expression. Great intellectual leaders and social reformers foresaw the hope of a cooperative rather than a competitive society. They were not idle dreamers but set forth realistic plans and programs for the realization of their ideals.

Nor have such programs remained in the realm of theory. Every now and then the dream has been taken literally and has led groups of people into working cooperative units. The leaders, among them Owen, Fourier, Cabet, have been practical-minded theorists who held that a people without vision must perish and that only a "new way of life" can save men from their own madness. In recent times we have seen established the modern cooperative community, wherein the dream has hardened into sober reality.

In Soviet Russia, in Mexico, in Palestine, the cooperative has been effective in introducing the most advanced farming methods into formerly backward rural areas. By pooling of resources peasants have availed themselves of the advantages of large-scale farming, and have thereby increased production and raised their standards of living. The cooperative has brought medical care, improvement in diet, and more decent and sanitary housing, to people who formerly lived in dirt and squalor, suffering from malnutrition or other diseases of poverty. Destitute farm folk, as full-fledged members of a cooperating group, have acquired, often for the first time in their lives, a sense of economic and social security. In fostering participation in the arts, literature, and scientific progress, this system has, finally, helped to redress the most distressing evil of rural existence, the "idiocy of village life."

Although the cooperative community is the accepted form of rural organization in one big country, Soviet Russia, and its number is steadily increasing in several other countries, relatively little

is known about it in the United States. The attempt of the Farm Security Administration, in 1937, to establish this type of settlement for the rehabilitation of low-income farmers has aroused slight interest in outside circles. Today the necessity approaches of rehabilitating whole masses of people, so dislocated by war that the Government will have to cooperate with them in their plans, and in many cases make plans for them. According to various estimates, some fifteen to twenty million people of Europe will find themselves in need of resettlement. No country, not even the United States, can handle so gigantic a task alone. Some inter-governmental authority will undoubtedly have to be established for the purpose. To scrutinize closely the merits of group settlement should be part of the preparatory work of postwar resettlement planning.

It is in the light of such considerations that the present study is undertaken, in an attempt to sum up the lessons offered by cooperative communities of the past and present. The work deals with two principal tasks: (1) a description of the most significant instances of cooperative living in relation to postwar planning; (2) their application to resettlement today. The historical survey will be brief. Those who wish to review the story of these communities in detail will find available extensive works of research and a number of special monographs.[1] We shall place the greater emphasis on groups still in existence or only recently disbanded, as most relevant to our problem.

We shall consider (1) the motives back of each community, with a short history of its origin; (2) the human element, membership requirements, duties and rights of members, their racial, social, and political backgrounds; (3) administration and management; (4) the degree of cooperation practiced; (5) finances, credits, expenses, and profits; (6) the approximate turnover in each community; and, finally, (7) an evaluation of advantages and drawbacks in relation to postwar resettlement.

Particular attention will be paid to the degree of cooperation practiced. It will be easily noticed that there are two kinds of cooperation: one limited to economic goals, and one that embraces most, if not all, social values. We have called the first kind "segmental," and the other "comprehensive," cooperation. The two

[1] Joseph W. Eaton and Saul M. Katz, *Research Guide on Cooperative Group Farming* [Preface by Edward A. Norman] (New York: H. W. Wilson Co., 1942).

terms are by no means mutually exclusive; both designate, in fact, different degrees of the same mode of socio-economic association, and are in turn subject to gradation.

We shall attempt to draw concrete conclusions from past and present experience, and to make definite suggestions for the post-war community, but we should perhaps emphasize that we are in no sense advocating the cooperative community as the one and only solution. We merely aim to make the point that, under the expected circumstances, it is the type of settlement that seems best suited to the pioneer task of breaking the ground for other types. The Zionist resettlement, for example, is proof that group settlement will succeed under sub-tropical conditions where individual farming is unable to make headway. High-willed groups of pioneers, in this case, deciding to forget about "mine" and "thine," were able to handle jobs of reclamation and reconstruction which no paid worker would have been willing to undertake. But their achievement did not establish the Kvutza as the one type of resettlement in Palestine. After some thirty years this colony includes only one-seventh of the total Jewish rural population, while the rest continues to settle in more or less individual manner.

In similar fashion, we are proposing the cooperative community as an instrument for breaking the ground, and then only after the strictest selection of membership. It is a type of settlement whose success depends on members capable of deriving full satisfaction out of cooperation. We plead that their number is large, and that they should not be forced to squander their energies in diffused attempts along the traditional pattern of individual farming. They should be given an opportunity to concentrate their strength in cooperative living. If they succeed, they will, like those pioneers of Palestine, not only stimulate the agricultural development of the surrounding countryside but also help to establish superior standards of rural life in general. The purpose of this survey is to aid in organizing cooperative communities as a vanguard of rural resettlement.

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CHAPTER I

COOPERATIVE COMMUNITIES OF THE PAST

In the United States, 262 cooperative communities are known to have been established – some of them merely branches of larger settlements.[2] Similar groups, though fewer in number, have been organized in Europe. Both in America and elsewhere, for the most part, these experiments have been short-lived.[3] According to statistics compiled by Lee Emerson Deets on 130 settlements, 91 lasted less than a decade, 59 less than five years, 50 only two years, and 32 only one year. The life of some of the more intellectual experiments, like New Harmony, Indiana, Brook Farm, Massachusetts, the Oneida Colony, New York State, was so brief that they belong definitely to the 19th century past.

A small percentage of these groups, however, have persisted more than a century. Of these, three have been disbanded: Ephrata Cloister, Pennsylvania, which existed 173 years (1732-1905); the Shaker Communities, settled in various states of the U.S.A. (1778 – *ca.* 1940); and the Harmonists, or Rappists, whose settlements, in Pennsylvania and Indiana, lasted a hundred years (1805-1905). Three other communities, with a record that goes back to the 18th century (one of them to the 16th century) have continued to the present day: the Amana Community, Iowa, founded in Europe in 1714, and moved to the United States in 1842; [4] the Doukhobors, organized in Russia about the middle of the 18th century, who settled in Canada (*ca.* 1879), where they still live in several cooperative communities; and, finally, the Hutterites, whose significant group originated in Moravia in 1528. The Hutterites came to the

[2] See Lee Emerson Deets, "Data From Utopia," *Sociolog*, Vol. 3, No. 3 [mimeographed] (Hunter College of the City of New York, December, 1940).

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] Amana modified its organization in 1932 but still maintains numerous features of cooperation.

United States in 1874. They live in fifty communities in South Dakota, Montana, and Canada (Manitoba and Alberta).

Fundamental Motives

On the basis of their fundamental motives, all cooperative settlements may be divided into two classes: the *religious* and the *socio-reformistic.* It is interesting to note that the foregoing long-lived communities are of a religious character.

Religious purism – the desire to return to the very roots of Christianity, to live as did Jesus and his disciples – was the dominant motive for establishing these religious communities. Men devoted to this ideal were not satisfied with the Reformation, which seemed merely to oppose the excessive formalism of the Catholic church. Such men, eager to practice the fundamentals of their belief, were persecuted as heretics by their powerful church and the society which it controlled. Emigration to the open spaces of the New World provided the most feasible solution. As a result nearly all the religious communities in the United States were settled by sectarian refugees from Europe.

Social reform, on the other hand, was the chief aim of the Fourierist, Owenite, Icarian, and other nonreligious communities. The founders may have differed from one another in many respects, but they all held in common a thorough dissatisfaction with social conditions in their respective countries, and particularly with the status of the "lower classes." Like alchemists, they sought a solution that would at one stroke remedy all the ailments of society. They believed they had found it in the principle of the cooperative community. By establishing such settlements in the New World, with its boundless opportunities, they hoped to realize their cherished ideals.

It is significant that in most of these Utopian settlements the motive of race persecution played a small part. In few of them, for example, is there any record of Jewish membership. Exceptions include two religious groups, Keil's Bethel Community (1844-1881) in Missouri and Oregon, and the Shakers. V. F. Calverton [5] says that in Bethel "even a Jewish family enrolled," and that "many Jews found Shakerism a great retreat, an escape from the tortures and desolations of the orthodox Christian communities and

[5] V. F. Calverton, *Where Angels Dared to Tread* (New York: Bobbs Merrill Co., 1941), p. 88.

colonies." He testifies that the Jews "were treated with the same cordiality as everyone else." [6]

At the end of the 19th century a number of exclusively Jewish Utopian communities were established. Twenty such colonies (see Table 1) are listed in the *Jewish Encyclopedia* and the *Universal Jewish Encyclopedia.* All but one of them were founded after 1880, during the large-scale pogroms instituted by Russia and Rumania. The motives were both philanthropic and socio-reformistic. Some of the colonies were financed by rich organizations in various capitals,[7] which sought a haven for the persecuted Jews of eastern Europe; some were founded by individual leaders. One group, New Odessa, apparently of the socio-reformistic type, was sponsored by a mother society, the Sons of the Free. (See Table 1.)

These settlements varied in size from eight to eighty families. Bethlehem Jehudah, the most highly collectivistic group, considered communistic, had a membership of twenty-five young men, all unmarried. These communities were of short duration, only eight lasting more than a year. Of these, seven were in existence from two to five years, and one, the Palestine Colony, nine years. Little is known about their management; they were run on a more or less cooperative basis, adopting some of the Utopian policies characteristic of the socio-reformistic groups.

Due to their paucity of records they can contribute little to the study of cooperative living that cannot be better learned from the larger and longer-lived communities, whether religious or socio-reformistic. The same causes of dissolution seem to have operated with them as with the other nonreligious groups. Theirs is the familiar story that begins with enthusiastic idealism and ends in disillusionment and failure.

Lessons of Experience

In summarizing what is to be learned from these communities of the past, lack of systematic planning is perhaps the first lesson. Whether they lasted only a few years or through several generations, this lack of planning means that few, if any, of their procedures would be applicable to modern, scientific resettlement. This is true,

6 *Ibid.*, p. 106.

7 The Alliance Israelite Universelle, the Baron de Hirsch Fund, the Hebrew Emigrant Aid Society of New York, the Montefiore Agricultural Aid Society of New York, and the Beth El Hebrew Relief Society of Detroit.

TABLE 1*

JEWISH COOPERATIVE COMMUNITIES OF THE PAST

Name	Location	Period of Existence	No. of Years	No. of Families	Leader	Source of Support
Sholom	Wawarsing, Ulster County, N.Y.	1837–1842	5	13	Moses Cohen	
Sicily Island	Sicily Island, La.	1881–1882	1	60		Alliance Israelite
Cremieux	South Dakota	1882–1885	3	20	Herman Rosenthal	
Bethlehem Jehudah	South Dakota	1885–1887	2	25**		Alliance Israelite
Cotopaxi	South Dakota	1882–1884	2	15		Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society of N.Y.
New Odessa	Near Glendale, Ore.	1884–1888	4	40 (Persons)		Ass'n, "Sons of the Free"
Painted Woods	North Dakota	1882–1887	5	54		
Sir Moses Montefiore	Kansas	1884–1885	1	8		
Unnamed	Near Lasker, Kan.	1885– ?	Few Yrs.	Less Than 8		Montefiore Agricultural Aid Soc. of N.Y.
Beer Sheba	Kansas	1882– ?	Few Yrs.	?		
Hebron	Kansas	?	Short Period	80		Montefiore Agricultural Aid Soc. of N.Y.
Gilead	Kansas	1886	1	20		
Touro	Kansas	?	Short Period	12		
Leeser	Kansas	?	Short Period	12(ca.)		
Carp Lake	Michigan	?	?	12	Lazarus Silverman, Chicago	
Palestine	South Dakota	1891–1900	9	16		Hebrew Relief Soc. of Detroit, and Baron de Hirsch Fund
Washington	Near Wash., D.C.	1883	Short Period	?		
Waterview	Virginia	1882–1886	4	?		
Chesterfield	Connecticut	1892–1901(?)		28		
Clarion Colony	Utah	1910– ?	Several Years	50	Isaac Landman, Philadelphia	Jewish Agricultural and Colonial Ass'n, and National Farm School

* Compiled from data in *Jewish Encyclopedia* (Funk and Wagnalls, New York, 1901) and *Universal Jewish Encyclopedia* (New York, 1941).

** This figure refers to unmarried men.

for instance, in regard to the vital problem of selecting members – a problem which seems to have been almost completely ignored.

In the religious communities a declaration of faith was the chief qualification for admission to membership. In many cases this method was doubtless satisfactory, but only because of circumstances that could scarcely be reproduced today. These applicants were closely knitted to the group through the common ordeal of hardship and persecution. In this way, before application they had already passed through a highly selective probationary period. In a modern community such a process of selection would be impossible; new standards of admission would be needed.

With the socio-reformistic settlements, methods of selection were used which would be even more inadequate as requirements for admission to contemporary communities. The reformers, intent on solving all the problems of social disorder, were reluctant to exclude anyone from the potential benefits of their ideal settlement. They felt that they should do no more than ask the candidate the vaguest questions: "Are you subject to selfish impulses?" Or "Is the practice of inequality inclined to offend your sensibilities?"[8] They depended solely on the statements of each applicant. Because of this laxity in standards the socio-reformistic communities were, most of them, doomed from the start.

Then there was the question of leadership in these settlements, consideration of which should teach something of value to postwar planners. In the religious communities, administrative functions were almost always vested in the founder or in the spiritual leader. This centralization of power had the advantage of unified planning and direction, but, unfortunately, made the settlement entirely dependent on the whims and capacity of one individual. Consequently, most of the religious communities were unable to survive their leader's death. During his lifetime he was accepted as the instrument of God's will, and the members readily acquiesced in the strictest discipline. But, in case of his death or resignation, only where his followers held steadfast to faith in Divine guidance, could he be replaced without danger to the continuance of the community. The history of the Hutterites illustrates this degree of faith.

[8] Cf. Charles Gide, *Communist and Cooperative Colonies* (New York: T. Y. Crowell Co.), pp. 150 f. Translated by Ernest F. Row from the French original of 1928.

In the socio-reformistic communities, based on theory rather than creed, the exponent of the theory became the leader — with one exception. Fourier's principles were put into practice by others, and only after his death. Owen and Cabet, to name the most significant of the socio-reformistic founders, took a direct part in the establishment of their colonies and often acted as arbiters in the strifes and dissensions among the members. Since the authority resided in the theory, rather than in faith, the survival of the colony depended less than in the religious community on the presence of the originator.

Whatever their lack of systematic planning, it must be admitted that these communities achieved a measure of comprehensive cooperation, especially in the religious settlements. Their fundamental principle resembled the ideal: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs." This was also true of the socio-reformistic groups, but with more frequent violations of the ideal. The Fourierist colonies, for example, cooperated in production only. In agreement with his point of view, they were not much more than a joint stock company. They had community kitchens, but in all other matters except production, they followed the principle of private property. Each member received dividends in proportion to the number of shares he owned.

As we have seen, the majority of the communities failed. It is generally agreed, however, that the *causes of failure were rarely economic*. Although poor land and inadequate capital were severe handicaps, such difficulties were often overcome by migration and extreme frugality. Authorities convince us that we shall have to look further than their economic status to account for the lack of success among cooperative groups. According to Ralph Albertson, who surveyed numerous mutualistic communities, "Few, if any, colonies failed because they could not make a living . . . as communities of self-support through mutual support their accomplishment was very considerable." [9]

And Charles Gide testifies thus to the solvency of the Shakers: "The wealth of these communities was estimated at 10 or 12 million dollars (£2,000,000 or £2,400,000) or 1,000 per head, which is a very high figure, for if you divide the total wealth of France, 12,000,000, before the war by the population, 40,000,000, you will get an

[9] Ralph Albertson, "A Survey of Mutualistic Communities in America," *Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, Vol. 34 (October, 1936), p. 440.

average of only 300, which is a very much smaller figure than that representing the wealth of the Shakers."[10]

The North American Phalanx, a Fourierist group, paid dividends of 5 or 6 per cent, and even the Icarian colonies, despite extraordinary hardships, "did not die of poverty. They carried on somehow or other, and some of them even finished up in comparative comfort. This is proved by the fact that when they dissolved there was a pretty good share for each of the members."[11]

The causes of failure are to be found, of course, in poor location, i.e., unfavorable soil and climate, lack of transportation facilities. But dissolution came about more often because of (1) the quarrels among the settlers, as well as between them and the management; (2) the members' lack of experience in agriculture.

It is not useful for us to investigate further these experiments which have receded into the past. With less difficult research we can derive knowledge more helpful to postwar resettlement from recent communities and those active today. They have adopted much the same pattern of living as that of the older colonies and at the same time have modified it to accord with modern conditions. Thus they will serve as a *link between the past and the present.* Outstanding among colonies of contemporary interest are the Hutterites, religious in character; New Llano, a socio-reformistic community; and Sunrise Colony, a Jewish group, similar in type to New Llano. With all three, abundant data are available. For the Hutterites we have the extensive research of the Rural Settlement Institute, whose staff has obtained material through direct observation of their communal activities. For the others we have many source records, including printed reports of individual settlers, to supplement the oral evidence of participating members.

In later chapters we shall emphasize the modern cooperative farms established by the Farm Security Administration (1937-1943). And finally we shall consider three active modern types in foreign lands: The Mexican Ejido; the Kolkhoz, within the frame of the Soviet Union; and the Palestinian Kvutza, within the Zionist Organization.

[10] Gide, *op. cit.*, p. 101. [11] *Ibid.*

CHAPTER II

THE HUTTERITES

In 1525 the Anabaptist church of the Brethren was founded in Zurich among the followers of the Swiss, Zwingli, who preceded the German, Luther, by a year in preaching Reformation doctrines. To the Anabaptists the Hutterites of the present day trace their origin as a religious community. The basic tenets of the Anabaptist creed, including nonresistance, proclaimed at the time of founding, are still maintained by the Hutterite colonies.

The year 1525, in which the new church was founded, saw also the start of the Peasant War. Because of their pacifist doctrines, faithful Anabaptists were hunted, deprived of their possessions, often martyred. Zwingli himself was killed in the battle of Kappel, October 11, 1531.

Of those who escaped persecution, a number, variously estimated at from six to twelve thousand, assembled in 1526 in the city of Nikolsburg near Bruenn, capital of Moravia. There they tried to establish a settlement, but dissension soon divided the Brethren into two camps, conservative and radical. The latter insisted on extreme pacifism and unlimited sharing of property. Two hundred of these radicals moved to Austerlitz, where they settled on the estates of the Prince of Kaunitz.

According to Hutterite legend, the rule against private property originated during this journey. While camping in Bogenitz, the Brethren elected four of their group to assist their leader. The chosen four spread out a mantle and directed each member to place thereon all his worldly possessions. This 16th-century roadside drama established a precedent for the Hutterite branch of the Anabaptists: all their property is held in common to the present day.

The colonies take their name from Jacob Hutter, leader of a Tyrolian group of Anabaptists, whose adherents formed a new settlement. The social structure which Hutter set up in that distant day is still upheld by the modern Hutterites. Its ground plan specified the abolition of private property and made the basis for unlimited comprehensive cooperation. In time Hutter's radicalism became too extreme for some of the members, and the dissenters left the colony to form communities of their own, less radical in character. It is worth a second thought that the settlements with a limited form of cooperation were soon destroyed by further dissension, while the extreme type of social system established by Hutter still survives.

Hutterite communities spread throughout Moravia. They were subjected to murderous persecution, and Hutter died a martyr in 1536. Nevertheless, the ranks of his followers steadily increased. In a short time there were 86 Bruderhofs in Moravia, each of which housed from 300 to 600 persons.

The interval from 1565 to 1592 is said to have been the golden era of the Hutterites. Though attacked by church and Emperor, the colonists were protected by the nobles, whose most trusted and industrious tenants they had become. Their cooperative system gave them a decided economic advantage. The apostolic simplicity they strove to emulate exacted an identification of work with religious duty; these men and women worked as ardently as they prayed. In pooling their income, then buying and processing their goods cooperatively, they produced more efficiently than other groups of workers. Cooperative living afforded each member a chance to develop his special abilities and thus provided the community with gifted leadership.

Always willing to learn, the Hutterites frequently sent members abroad to study industrial innovations, and they readily adopted improved techniques. Soon they dominated the market for various products. Their economic system, which resembled that of a modern community more than that of the guilds then current, has been described as "an almost even blending of large-scale industry and large-scale agriculture." They were and are an anomaly – conservative in their basic principles and progressive in their industrial practices.

Because of their superior knowledge, skill, and diligence, they were in great demand as tenants of the nobles. Even the Emperor

Rudolph II, King of Bohemia, used the services of a Hutterite physician. But as these colonists grew more and more prosperous, they also excited a corresponding envy and animosity. "Such successes did not come without arousing great enmity on the part of the craftsmen and others native to the country, who saw themselves outdone by a race alien in blood and heretical in religion; and every means was resorted to to break the prosperity of the communities." [12] In this respect their story resembles that of the Jews. The Hutterites were subjected to oppressive taxation, to arbitrary fines, and to violence, including murder.

In 1620 the nobles who had protected these communities were defeated in the battle of White Mountain; deprived of their possessions, the Hutterites were driven out of Moravia. For 250 years or more, they wandered from place to place, first to Transylvania and Hungary; then to Rumania and Wallachia; finally, to Russia, where they settled near Kiev (in the Ukraine) and, later, in the Crimea. In 1874 they migrated to America and established a community in South Dakota, beyond the frontiers of existing settlements.

There they lived in peace up to the First World War, when they were again subjected to persecution. They were attacked by their neighbors for precisely the same reasons as in Moravia centuries before. Their pacifist creed was subversive to the times. They spoke German, the language of the enemy. Last but not least, the Hutterites were envied for their alleged wealth. Most of them fled to Canada, which was hospitable to sectarian minorities. During the past two decades, some of them have returned to their previous settlements in America. According to Deets, in January, 1939, there were 49 colonies in existence, of which 44 were in Canada, and 5 in the United States (4 in South Dakota, 1 in Montana). The membership totalled about 5,000 individuals.

The Hutterite Faith

Let us try to analyze the strength of this faith which, despite all vicissitudes, inspired these Hutterites and still holds them together.

[12] See Bertha W. Clark, "The Hutterian Communities," *Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. 32, No. 4 (June-August, 1924), pp. 357-374, 468-486. To this study and to Deets' *The Hutterites: A Study of Social Cohesion* (Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, 1939) our presentation of the history of the Hutterites is most indebted.

The Articles of Incorporation, which they filed when they first settled in the United States, define their purpose in no vague terms:

> . . . promoting, engaging in, and carrying on the Christian religion, Christian worship and religious education and teachings according to our religious belief that all members should act together as one being, and have, hold, use, possess and enjoy all things in common, we all being of one mind, heart and soul according to the word of God revealed to us.

An even more literal statement of their ancient tenets is to be found in the petition they presented to President Wilson in 1918:

> The fundamental principles of our faith, as concerns practical life, are community of goods and non-resistance. Our community life is founded on the principle "What is mine is thine," or in other words, on brotherly love and humble Christian service according to Acts II:44, 45, "And all that believe were together, and had all things in common and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need."

When Hutter introduced this principle of *comprehensive cooperation*, many of the Brethren, as already noted, disagreed with him and quit. During the centuries of migration, there were numerous modifications of the system. Those who held strictly to his leadership, however, had shared in so many trials and hardships that, prior to their arrival in the United States, their communities were closely knit, each in itself and each in relation to the entire group. This was true both spiritually and biologically, and the cohesion has continued to the present day.

The population grew almost entirely through natural increase within the colonies. Hutterite families are related to one another by blood. Today we find among the 5,000 Brethren only sixteen family names. In the Jamesville, South Dakota, community, for example, there are nineteen families, each of which, with one exception, is related to four or five other families. A member who gets married may leave the group and join that of the marriage partner. But, as a rule, the size of each colony remains about the same, the number of colonies increasing through partition. Their racial composition, on the other hand, as Clark points out, is "one of the most complex to be found among any of our immigrant peoples." [13]

[13] Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 481.

The founders came, as we have seen, from Switzerland, southern Germany, and the Tyrol. They were joined by Bohemians, Moravians, and, later, by Slovaks and Italians. In Russia they took in some of the Mennonite families of Danish and Dutch origins. Clark states that "at least two of the present Hutterian families have Jewish strains of blood."[14] All colonists speak English, but the traditional language is Tyrolese, a German dialect very similar to the Swiss language. Their translation of the Bible is in Tyrolese.

The Cooperative Spirit

One might speculate here as to whether the dual nature of the Hutterites – at once progressive and conservative – does not derive from this multi-racial background and this concentrated breeding. Whatever the cause, we cannot emphasize too much the age-old spirit of enterprise, conjoined with steadfast cooperation, which pervades their institutions. They cooperate both as producers and consumers. Students brought up in our highly competitive society find it hard to believe that here and now on the plains of Dakota and in the valleys of Montana, there are people never motivated by private gain, who literally receive no personal reward for their work. Each, emulating the example of Christ and the disciples, identifies his own welfare with that of the group. *All things are in common.* Each does as much work as he can, and obtains what he needs of the goods produced by all. And yet observers agree that the Hutterites, though rejecting the profit incentive, must be considered a highly industrious people who have achieved a successful economy.

There can be no loafing, for no member is in good standing unless he performs manual labor. Every man over fifteen and every woman over seventeen are provided with work. Likewise, it is said, there is no such thing as boredom. One's work is not mere exertion but, rather, an essential occupation, and the pace is adjusted to one's ability and the needs of the product. With production for use instead of profit, a well-planned schedule of work usually makes any "speed-up" system unnecessary. Accelerated work among the Hutterites is needed only during the hardest season, and in picking of fruit or corn. Work satisfaction is, therefore, at a high level and constitutes an adequate psychological incentive.

[14] Efforts to ascertain the names of these two families have thus far been unsuccessful.

Hutterite Customs

Social control is actuated by customs and mores developed over a long period of time, rather than by formal rules of behavior. It is through tradition dictated by a common faith that the colonies are bound together. These customs, referred to as "the Hutterische way," constitute an uncodified set of controls. Violation is punishable by public censure, and in extreme cases by ban or excommunication. These are the only disciplinary measures.

The Hutterite method is sustained in a number of ways. The church and the school transmit folklore to succeeding generations and indoctrinate them with the principles of the faith. Members of all ages attend church daily. The bringing up of children, however, is perhaps the most important factor. Education begins at the age of two and one-half years, when the child is sent to the Kleine Schule (in existence over 300 years and thus one of the oldest nursery institutions). At five the pupil is promoted to the German School. At six he is admitted to the elementary school, run by state-approved teachers and following an average public-school curriculum. But each day, for a half hour before and after classes, he must also attend the German School. Graduation from high school ends his formal education; the colony has no activities on the collegiate level.

For the rearing of children in the "Hutterische way" the community furnishes all necessary facilities, including additional rooms, food, and clothing, as well as education. During the school years the child is kept apart from adults until, at seventeen, he is accepted as a full-fledged member of the settlement. The pupil has his meals in the children's house, not with adults. The German School teaches only the traditions of the Hutterites. History, regarded as a record of wars, is excluded. The teaching places emphasis on the principal Hutterite ideas: peace is by far preferable to war; the individual should strive not for his own profit but solely for the welfare of the group; his worth to the community depends on his doing a reasonable share of manual work.[15] The fact that the young man or woman of seventeen is, as a rule, not tempted by the teachings of the elementary school, and emerges as a faithful member of the community, testifies to the potency of this religious system.

Besides education, there are other factors that feed the flame of

[15] Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 373.

cooperation. There are helpful contacts among the various settlements. When any community is choosing its spiritual leader, delegates from other communities of the group have a significant voice in the election. One community lends money to another. Members exchange useful information and pay each other visits. The young men sometimes find their brides in sister communities. Within the settlement itself the framework of living is so thoughtfully planned that few of the Brethren would dream of deserting it. Responsibilities for public welfare – medical treatment, the support of the aged, the care of invalids, widows, and orphans – are assumed as natural obligations. A Hutterite community may be likened to a mutual insurance company, or perhaps more fittingly to a loving family.

All economic affairs are handled by the colony as a whole. Each family unit, therefore, serves only biological and emotional needs. But marriage and procreation are considered religious duties; rare is the adult who prefers celibacy. The newly married are provided with a standardized assortment of essentials: a bed, table, three chairs, a heating stove, wardrobe, chest, curtains, paint and varnish, blankets, quilts, linens, a clock, and forty pounds of pillow feathers. An apartment is reserved for each couple. Divorce is forbidden.

In the United States, the Hutterites live in large houses of stone or wood, subdivided to accommodate from ten to fifteen families. Each family, depending on its size, uses from two to six rooms. The walls are painted or papered. Since the cooking, baking, laundering, and canning are done cooperatively, the members have no kitchens or water pipes in their apartments. Means of "luxury" or "worldliness," such as radios, are not allowed in the home. But the young members have been known to smuggle a crystal set into their rooms and to "sin" by secretly listening.

The Hutterites make most of their own clothing, modeled on traditional patterns. For men, the standard color is dark gray or black. They wear sack coats, loose trousers, and wide-brimmed hats. All married men are expected to grow beards. The women, too, wear dark clothes, the dresses simple in style, with full skirts and long-sleeved waists reaching to the neck. Their headdress is a polka-dotted kerchief, folded diagonally, though they have recently begun to wear sunbonnets while at work in the fields. The community prohibits decorative or costly dress, and if a young girl is caught wearing anything of the sort, the forbidden frivolity is promptly

taken away from her. Only the *Lehrer Leut'* communities permit the use of buttons; the other groups use hooks and eyes.

Like their houses and their dress, the diet of the Hutterites is simple but substantial. Meals are prepared in the central kitchen. In the communal dining-hall where the adults eat, the men and women separate and sit at tables in opposite sections of the room. Only the Preacher, as head of the community, and his assistant are served in their own homes. Honored guests also dine at the home of this spiritual leader. For snacks between meals and for guests, each family is supplied with fruits, wine, butter, honey, preserves, and bread.

The only kind of money received by the members is the *zehrgeld*, or pin money, to be used when they go to town on business or visit another community. The sum is insignificant. In the Jamesville community during the whole of 1940, it amounted to an average of $2.50 for each adult and $0.40 for each child. Social affairs and entertainment are held in contempt. The abundance of leisure time is spent in visiting and "just talking." The chief diversions are weddings and Sunday church services.

Patriarchal Government

The patriarchal government, which makes this system function, is directed by religious traditions on the one hand, and the requirements of large-scale agriculture and small industries on the other. The colonies are divided into three main groups: the *Schmieden Leut'*; the *Darius Leut'*; and the *Lehrer Leut'*. The settlements are no longer a single incorporated association. In the United States, each colony is now incorporated as a separate organization under the corporation laws of South Dakota, and is thus legally autonomous. Each community is also administratively autonomous. Only in spiritual matters is there a kind of over-all authority. In each group an Elder (*Aeltester*) presides at a conference held at irregular intervals, in which all other communities in that group are represented.[16] Occasionally, delegates from all the communities participate in a joint meeting.

The responsible officers in each community are (1) the Head of the Settlement; (2) a Council of Elders; (3) the managers of the

[16] The "Aeltester," or Bishop, acted as the spiritual leader of all Hutterites during the early years of the order, but this practice has been discontinued.

diverse activities; (4) the managers of women's work. Saul M. Katz lists the following officers for the Jamesville community:

Head of the Community:	Preacher *(Praediger)*
Council of Elders:	Preacher
	Assistant Preacher
	General Manager or Head Boss *(Wirt* or *Haushalter)*
	Farm Boss *(Weinzerl)*
	Elder *(Zeug Bruder)*
	Elder *(Zeug Bruder)*
Managers of Activities:	Cattle Boss *(Fich Wirt)*
	Hog Boss *(Schwein Wirt)*
	Sheep Boss
	Chicken Boss *(Henne Mann)*
	Geese Boss *(Gans Mann)*
	Duck Boss *(Enten Mann)*
	Turkey Boss
	Smith *(Schmied)*
	Carpenter *(Schreiner)*
	Beekeeper *(Bienen Mann)*
	Shoemaker
	Horse Boss *(Pferd Mann)*
Members in Charge of Women's Work:	Head Cook
	Garden Woman

All officers are elected by direct vote. Only in the case of the Preacher and the Assistant Preacher is Divine approval invoked. If the office of Preacher becomes vacant, as a result of death, resignation, or removal from office for unworthy conduct, each Elder can nominate two candidates. All the adult males, besides two to four delegates from other communities, vote on the nominees. The names of the candidates who receive five or more votes are drawn from a hat, and the first name drawn decides who is to be the new Preacher. In this way the Hutterites practice a fundamental principle of democracy and at the same time give the Divine Will a chance to manifest itself. The community elects, but God chooses. Despite such precautions, however, the winning candidate must serve a probationary period of several months before he can be ordained the religious head. Thereafter he enjoys life tenure, though resignation and impeachment are still possibilities.

Besides acting as the spiritual leader, the Preacher supervises all

the mundane activities of the group. The Assistant Preacher is his aide and substitute, but is concerned chiefly with the education and discipline of children. All officers perform manual labor, and the holding of office carries with it no special privileges. In fact, such tasks merely add to the officer's responsibilities.

In everyday matters, the Council of Elders discuss each problem as it arises and make their decisions. There is also the General Assembly, made up of all the male adults, to which important questions are submitted. Women have no vote. The Assembly decides on the admission and baptism of new members, transactions involving substantial expenditures, disciplinary measures, extended leaves of absence, and changes of administration. The older members are in charge of departmental activities. The younger men form a labor reserve which is shifted from one task to another wherever most needed. Work assignments are given out by the Farm Boss.

Division of Labor

There is no rigid division of labor. Versatility is encouraged. Thus, the job of Duck Boss takes up little time and may be combined with the job of shoemaking. The Turkey Boss may also serve as the Beekeeper. Bachelors specialize in various fields of their own choosing, for there are many opportunities in diversified farming and hand industries. The Jamesville community, for instance, cultivates grain and vegetables and owns a small orchard. Other communities raise cattle (for beef and milk), sheep, hogs, chickens, geese, ducks, and turkeys. The small industrial enterprises include broom-making, cobbling, milling, carpentry, and a blacksmith shop. Specialists in one type of work can be shifted to another only with the consent of the General Assembly.

Women perform tasks considered best suited to them, such as cooking, baking, laundry work, and soap making. Some of them can vegetables and fruits; some of them breed geese; others spin and dye woolens. Also they work in the garden and occasionally help in the fields. Women over forty-five take care of certain social services, such as planning the meals of children.

As a rule, all the members take turns in doing the dirty or unpleasant work. The average working day is 7½ hours in winter and 8½ hours in summer, but the schedule varies with the amount of cultivated land and the number of cattle in the community. Like

their Moravian forebears, the Hutterites eagerly search for the most modern techniques of production.

Stability of Hutterite Communities

There should be noted the negligible turnover among the Hutterite communities. Desertions rarely occur. In 1941 Katz reported that only three individuals had left the Jamesville community since 1938, and of these, two eventually returned. In this and three other colonies he visited, there have been no cases of expulsion during the same period.

TABLE 2*

AGE AND SEX DISTRIBUTION IN JAMESVILLE

Sex	Married	Unmarried — Over 15	Total — Over 15	Children Under 15	Total
Male	16	13	29	38	67
Female	19	20	39	23	62
Total	35	33	68	61	129

* Figures taken from data supplied by Katz.

If the size of each community remains nearly constant, it is not because of desertions or expulsions. It is because the Hutterites, believing that cooperation is meaningless unless the membership is limited, prefer to subdivide a colony rather than to let it expand beyond 150 or 200 persons. The number of colonies, as we have seen, increases therefore through partition, rarely through admitting applicants from the outside. In fact, the requirements for admission (about the same as in the first 16th-century Hutterite colony) nearly exclude the possibility of foreign increase: an applicant must have attained the age of seventeen and must have been a communicant of the Hutterian church.[17] There was recently, however, an exception: a group was admitted *en bloc* into the church, members of a settlement founded in Germany in 1920, under the leadership of Eberhard Arnold and driven from Hitler's Germany in 1936. This group followed principles similar to, but not identical with, those of the Hutterites.[18]

[17] According to the "General By-Laws" of the Jamesville, South Dakota, Hutterian Society.

[18] When Hitler rose to power, the colony moved from Germany to England, settling at Ashton Keynes in 1936. The group, comprising 334 members—

The Hutterite groups are, in truth, distinguished by their serene self-sufficiency, and provide postwar planners with a stimulating pattern of study. But cooperation with them is motivated by a religion rooted in the distant past, and the "Hutterische way" would seldom be acceptable to modern groups.

Hutterite Finances

In 1941, members of the Rural Settlement Institute compiled pertinent data concerning four South Dakota communities: Bon Homme, Rockport, Jamesville, and New Elm Springs, which we give in full (see Tables 3, 4, and 5). It will be seen that in the

TABLE 3

DATA ON FOUR HUTTERITE COMMUNITIES IN THE UNITED STATES

Name	Location	Year Established	No. of Families	Acreage	Operated Acreage	Value Per Acre (Estimated)
Bon Homme	Near Tabor, S.D.	1874	28	7,200	6,400	$20–$25
Rockport	Near Alexandria, S.D.	1934	27	6,830	6,830	15– 24
Jamesville	Near Utica, S.D.	1938	19	2,738	3,089(?)	25
New Elm Springs	Near Ethan, S.D.	1936	13	4,160	6,160(?)	25

TABLE 4*

VALUE OF PROPERTY IN FOUR HUTTERITE COMMUNITIES

Name	Land and Buildings	Machinery	Livestock	Total Value
Bon Homme	$160,000	$33,700	$44,450	$238,150
Rockport	155,735	28,200	35,778	219,713
Jamesville	68,450	19,800	20,427	108,677
New Elm Springs	104,000	21,900	26,455	152,355

* For Bon Homme, the value of machinery was calculated from an estimate made for tax purposes; for Rockport and New Elm Springs, Eaton and Katz supplied estimates after consulting local experts; for Jamesville, a local bank submitted an inventory. The value of livestock was computed from comparable data.

men, women, and children – left England in 1941 and migrated to Paraguay. Unlike the Hutterites, they do not isolate themselves from other people. One of the first things they did, on arriving in Paraguay, was to erect a public hospital "to serve the people of the country."

TABLE 5

INCOME AND EXPENDITURES IN FOUR COMMUNITIES, 1940

(1) Bon Homme

Gross Income		$26,916.37
Less Operating Expenses		19,840.26
		$ 7,076.11
Less Other Expenses:		
Taxes	$1,373.47	
Gas and Oil	3,045.66	
Lawyers' Fees	150.00	
Books	196.46	
Teacher	490.00	
Charity	485.00	
	$5,740.59	
Less Interest on $238,150 at 5%	11,907.50	$17,648.09
		Deficit $10,571.98
Without Deduction of Interest		Profit $ 1,235.52

(2) Rockport

Gross Income	$33,354.68
Less Operating Expenses	28,767.87
	$ 4,586.81
Less Interest at 5% on $219,713	10,985.65
	Deficit $ 6,398.84
Without Deduction of Interest	Profit $ 4,586.81

(3) Jamesville

Gross Income		$18,150.08
Less Operating Expenses		6,630.18
		$11,519.90
Less Other Expenses:		
Insurance	$ 435.95	
Rent	569.39	
Lawyers' Fees	237.00	
Hardware	1,405.89	
Repairs	788.60	
	$3,436.83	
Less Interest on $107,877 at 5%	5,433.85	8,870.68
Add Other Income:		$ 2,649.22
Outside Labor	$ 491.82	
Oil and Gas Refunds	123.50	615.32
		Profit $ 3,264.54
Without Deduction of Interest		Profit $ 8,698.39

TABLE 5 (*Continued*)

(4) New Elm Springs

Gross Income			$23,293.72
Less Operating Expenses			16,183.29
			$ 7,110.43
Less Interest on $152,355 at 5%	$7,617.75		
Less Rent for 2,000 Acres	1,600.00		9,110.75
		Deficit	$ 2,107.32
Without Deduction of Interest		Profit	$ 5,510.43

calculation of income and expenditures, the computers have included an arbitrary interest rate of 5 per cent. This would be of value in comparing the Hutterite investments with those of competitive enterprise. But inasmuch as the Hutterites make no outside loans and do not charge interest to their members, it is not relevant to their economic picture. We have, therefore, in each case computed the balance without interest, so that each of the four communities shows a profit instead of a deficit.

In this calculation, "operating expenses" include the living expenses of members, but no labor costs, since there are none. In studying these tables one should note further that the Hutterites do not allow for depreciation or increased value of property. Their sole criterion in balancing income and expenses is whether or not they have been able to satisfy their simple needs, in order to live according to the tenets of their faith. Since they do not strive for more than self-sufficiency, it would be misleading to compare their economy with profit-making enterprises.

The property value per family (see Table 4) ranges from $5,720, in Jamesville, to $11,719, in New Elm Springs. The value per capita ranges from $840 to $3,047.

These computations are subject to error arising from the ambiguity and inaccuracy of records. It is difficult to verify estimates of income and expenditures. As Katz says: "The accounting system used by the Hutterians is quite simple. It consists of a journal in which all cash transactions are entered, a modified cash ledger in which cash income and cash expenses are broken up into ten different groups, and a sort of day book in which record of all sorts of transactions, inventories, and miscellaneous information is entered. The system is unreliable, entries are not always made, or if made are not always correct, and there is no way of checking

them. There is no attempt to reconcile the bank balance with the book balance." Table 5 is, therefore, based not only on such records but also on interviews with members and outside investigators and on special field studies.

The Hutterite method of accounting – merely keeping a family ledger – suffices as long as the colony operates efficiently. Details about standards of living, family income, and profit may be disregarded. The colonists work and share, as in a single family. But when things go wrong, the survival of the community may depend on whether its accounting system lays bare the causes of inefficiency so that appropriate remedial action can be taken.

Thus, another religious settlement, the Amana Community, run along Hutterite lines, was nearly bankrupted by the inefficient work of its members. Amana was established in Europe in the 18th century by the so-called "Inspirationists," and in 1842 was transferred to the United States. In 1932, it was converted into a cooperative stock company, combining individual ownership with certain cooperative features. Since then a strict accounting system has been maintained to keep track of how much work each member performs and what benefits or rewards he receives.

Advantages of the Hutterite Community

In the evaluation of the features of the Hutterite community that might be helpful in postwar resettlement, we find that certain merits of the system are common to all communities practicing comprehensive cooperation. This kind of social organization enjoys the following advantages:

(1) *Economic advantages:* (a) Producing for use and not for profit, the community can usually satisfy the basic wants of the members. (b) It provides diversified work and permanent continuous employment. (c) It facilitates large-scale agriculture and the use of modern machinery, with a relatively small per capita initial investment and limited consumption of goods. (d) Its high degree of self-sufficiency permits it to ignore market and price fluctuations, economic crises, booms, and depressions. (e) Its members have permanent security, for they can be expelled only for grave offenses and only with the consent of the whole community. (f) It frees the individual from economic worry and makes financial problems the concern of the entire group. As Deets points out, the Hutterites in South Dakota, "without aid of relief, public or

private . . . have remained solvent taxpayers in a state in which one-third of the population has been on relief, in which 75 per cent of the banks have failed, and in which the taxes have become delinquent on approximately one-third of taxable land."

(2) *Psychological advantages:* (a) Work satisfaction is very high, with pride in one's unhurried efforts – no competition, but instead friendly cooperation in the common interest. (b) Mental and emotional health are maintained, with no quarreling, no crime or suicides. A sense of security encourages self-confidence, directness, and dignity.

(3) *Socio-psychological advantages:* (a) The "we-feeling" is strongly developed, for the centuries-old behavior patterns call on each member to participate in the common effort, and important decisions are made by direct vote in the General Assembly. The colony is restricted as to size, thus keeping all relationships on a face-to-face level of intimacy. (b) From his schooling the child learns to fit into the community. Adults easily readjust themselves to changing conditions, for they can choose from among numerous kinds of work.

Disadvantages of the Hutterite Community

We should also consider the drawbacks of the system in relation to modern needs. Most of them seem to arise from adherence to outmoded religious objectives.

One disadvantage, it must be pointed out, is characteristic of all the cooperative communities: lack of privacy for the individual. Among the Hutterites, this, of course, is considered a religious virtue, as implied in their maxim: "To be a good Hutterite a man's will must be broken. . . . " Thus, he takes it as a matter of course that people should visit his apartment at any hour of the day or night, without knocking, and that all his time is subject to their pleasure. Even his leaves of absence must be approved by the group. Whether such complete lack of privacy is an unavoidable feature of comprehensive cooperation is doubtful. It is at any rate repellent to individuals accustomed to a high degree of personal independence.

In addition, the isolation and asceticism, dictated to the Hutterites by their religious creed, would be rejected by members of postwar nonreligious communities. In the early days of persecution, withdrawal from the outside world, as a means of preserving

their way of life, was consistent with their tenet of nonresistance. Since then they have made of isolation a virtue to which they steadfastly adhere. They have little contact with neighbors (the Cotswold Bruderhof is an exception) and contribute virtually nothing but taxes to the larger community of which theirs is a part.

Asceticism, too, is a natural result of their faith. In fancied emulation of Christ and his disciples, the settlers want to live a simple life wherein all intellectual sophistication is prohibited. They show little or no interest in the fine arts. They read no fiction, see no shows, hear no orchestras, draw no pictures. Even history must not be studied, for it might bring the martial sounds of the outside world into their peaceful, purposely colorless society. These patterns of behavior would be unacceptable to people who reject the underlying religious basis. Many of the Hutterite ways of life would, consequently, be inapplicable to postwar resettlement. Faith cannot be regulated by administrative procedures.

The problem is to apply properly the advantageous features of such communities, while avoiding features impractical today. Men and women of various religious convictions can be attracted only by the possibility of achieving a well-rounded enjoyment of life. That such enjoyment is possible, independent of religious creeds, has been amply demonstrated by the cooperative settlements of Palestine. The valuable lesson to be derived from the Hutterites lies perhaps in their admirable system of administration and in their practice of frugality. Moreover, it will become more and more apparent, as we continue this investigation, that some central emotional impulse, comparable to the religious motive, is important to the success of comprehensive cooperation.

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T. KALLUPA

CHAPTER III

NEW LLANO [19]

The Llano Cooperative Colony was founded in 1914 by Job Harriman, a prominent criminal lawyer of Los Angeles. It was organized as the Llano del Rio Company, and its first site, about forty-five miles north of Los Angeles, was acquired from the Mescal Land and Water Company. Here the colony remained three years, at which time the unsatisfactory soil and water conditions impelled some of the members, led by Harriman, to move to western Louisiana. In 1917, they took over the abandoned mill town of Stables, near Leesville, Louisiana, and changed the name of the town to New Llano. The colony remained in this locality "at least technically, until the court order for its final sale, in the middle of December, 1939." Since New Llano had a longer career than any of the other socio-reformistic experiments, its record discloses many significant facts concerning such communities.[20]

An authoritative history of New Llano has yet to be written. Literature on the subject consists largely of partisan argument and impressionistic observations by participants. Nevertheless, some of

[19] Data in this Chapter were taken from the following sources. Ernest S. Wooster, *Communities of the Past and Present* (New Llano, Pennsylvania: Llano Colonist, 1924); see Chapter entitled, "Llano Cooperative Colony." Charles Gide, *op. cit.*, p. 203. *The Gateway to Freedom* (A detailed prospectus published by the Llano Cooperative Colony, 1932). Bob Brown, *Can We Co-operate?* (New York: Roving Eye Press, 1940). Sid Young, *The Crisis in Llano Colony, 1935 — An Epic Story* (Pamphlet published in Los Angeles, California, 1936). Letters from former members of the colony, on file at the Rural Settlement Institute. Finally, various newspaper excerpts.

[20] The Icarian settlements, founded by Cabet and his followers, lasted forty-seven years (1848-1895), but no single community of the Icarians persisted more than twenty years.

the available data are of more immediate contemporary interest than in the case of older cooperative communities. The difficulties encountered in New Llano arose from conditions probably similar to those to be met with in the postwar world.

Aims of New Llano

Let us first examine the aims of this experiment in cooperative living. The founder, Harriman, summarized them as follows:

> Having been a socialist for twenty-three years and a believer in the theory of economic determinism, and in Marx' philosophy of surplus value as determined by the social labor power necessary to produce products, and the belief in materialistic conceptions of life, I assumed that if a cooperative colony could be established in which an environment were created that would afford each individual an equal and social advantage, that they would, in a comparatively short time, react harmoniously to this environment and the extreme selfishness and greed as it appears in the capitalist and in men of conflicting interests would be done away. . . .
>
> I also thought that the social relations . . . were vital, and that every uplifting social means within our reach should be adopted as the refining influence necessary to the intellectual, cultural, and economic condition of the colony. The purpose of all this was to show that a community could live together in harmony, could produce its own living, direct all of its members, maintain a higher standard of living than is usually maintained — and all with far less labor.
>
> I thought that if this could be done, then we could use this community as an example by which other communities could be built.[21]

Such motives are typical of socio-reformistic communities: the rational approach; emphasis on scientific method, particularly in the social sciences (in this case, Marxism was accepted) ; the assumption that all social problems can be solved by means of a cooperative community; and, finally, the desire to set an example, to pioneer in breaking the ground for others so that they, too, might attain prosperity and happiness.

The prospectus of the colony, published (probably in 1932) under the title *Gateway to Freedom*, states that the property owned consisted of "15,000 acres of fine land in the Highlands of Louisiana" and mentions the following advantages of the site: "low-priced lands, excellent transportation, abundant fuel supply, and the possibility of a greater diversity of crops produced at less ex-

21 Wooster, *op. cit.*, pp. 119 f.

pense . . . " Four units are listed in the prospectus: (1) the New Llano colony proper; (2) a unit operating about 700 acres of land, near Elton, Louisiana, some seventy miles southeast of New Llano; (3) the settlement of twenty-five members, about ten miles southwest of New Llano, whose work included sawmilling, gardening, and farming; and (4) a unit three miles south of the colony, called "Commonwealth Farm," of which we know only that it put special emphasis "on the practice of Christianity."

The Participants

In contrast to the Hutterite colonies, at New Llano membership fluctuated greatly in numbers. According to Gide, the total was 800 in 1920, 350 in 1923, and 188 in 1927,[22] but seems to have reached 700 to 800 at the time of dissolution. (The latter figures may have included nonresident as well as resident members.) Ernest S. Wooster reports there were nearly 700 members in California "at about the time it was decided that a new location must be sought." [23] According to a letter cited by Bob Brown, only 65 of these made the trek to Louisiana. They were joined by 25 families from Texas. After a brief period of violent conflicts, the Texans seceded and, by taking much of the common property with them, nearly destroyed the colony. The membership increased substantially during the depression of the 1930's, when the unemployed were admitted indiscriminately. This doubtless explains why the enrollment was so large at the time of liquidation.

To be admitted to membership, the applicant had to promise to comply with both the economic and the ideological regulations of the colony. He filled in an application blank containing a statement that "only industrious men and women of high ideals and constructive ideas, with reputations for good citizenship are desirable," and promising him a cordial welcome "as part of this noble enterprise" provided that he be willing to "work in harmony" with fellow cooperators. Also, the application blank was designed to elicit information about the financial resources of the applicant. If his application were accepted, he had to pay an admission fee by purchasing 2,000 shares of stock (at $1.00 each) in the cooperative stockholders' association. The prospectus states, however, that a down payment of $1,000 would be considered adequate to provide the member with tools and equipment. From groups, including

[22] Gide, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

[23] Wooster, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

families, applying as a unit, an additional fee was required: $200 each for adults, $150 for every child in the age group, 12 to 21 years, and $100 per child under 12 years of age. The number of individuals allowed to join as part of a group was determined by the membership committee of the Board of Directors.

During his first year at the colony, the member was considered on probation. Meanwhile, he could withdraw, or could be expelled. In either case, his fee would be returned to him, not immediately but in five equal annual installments. In the probationary period, he enjoyed all the rights, privileges, and benefits of membership except that he could not vote on business propositions or in elections. If he remained in the colony thereafter, he could pay the balance of his admission fee in cash or he could work it out. In the latter case, one dollar a day would be withheld from his income. His children, if reared in the settlement, became members automatically on reaching the adult age.

The ideological requirements of the colony were stated in the Llano pledge, which every applicant had to sign. This document expressed faith in "integral cooperative action" as a way of achieving "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Also included were twenty items listing all aspects of cooperation. To declare adherence to all these principles and policies, the applicant signed the pledge in the presence of a witness. His signature bound him to practice the "Declarations of Principles" – pronouncements which the colony used instead of a constitution.

We have no complete data on the distribution of members according to age or sex. Women could acquire membership on their own initiative. Brown, who in 1933 participated in the colony as an observer, stresses the presence of aged members: " . . . nowhere can American manhood be seen in healthier, happier independence. Pipe Ted Landrum, aged seventy, leaving the hotel porch at 9 P.M. for his lonely night shift at the ice plant. He's chipper as a youth and whistling on his way to unpaid labor. That's something to show any newcomer, already growing restless." [24] Elsewhere, Brown mentions " . . . life-beaten oldsters who formed too big a percentage of the colony to permit much progress." [25] He also comments on the intelligence of the members and on the nationalities represented: "Over on the hotel porch after supper one hears discussions of current science, Einstein, Revolution, Cosmogeny, and Mystic

[24] Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 103. [25] *Ibid.*, p. 123.

Masonry . . . Tales are told, too, of round-the-world adventures by spirited raconteurs, for this is a town as cosmopolitan as Manhattan, with its Russians, its Britishers, Frenchmen, and Wops; a lot of Germans greeting one another, 'Wie geht's, Landsmann?' Altogether a surprising number of internationalities." [26]

The colony professed religious tolerance. It had no church but provided "meeting places for those who wish to hold religious meetings." And there was unit 4, with its "emphasis on Christianity." Tolerance was also advocated in political matters. Although the colony, founded by a Marxist, was often accused of being communistic, Brown reported strong opposition to political communism: " . . . the colony slogan has always been, 'Reds not wanted.' " [27]

Turnover must have been large at all times, but we do not have the figures. Brown tells why members resigned: "Men and women . . . coming to Llano in the expectation of finding a cooperative paradise on this competitive earth. Once in, they sign the pledge and hold revivals, then when the afflatus is punctuated through having to work 48 hours a week, fight vermin, and chase other animals all night, they back-slide, return to sit on the mourner's bench, back-slide again, write a renunciation, and, finally, slip away for good, either by invitation or self-propelled." [28]

Practice versus Theory

The contradictions between theory and practice multiplied. As we have seen, the founder and his associates wanted to make of Llano an example for others to emulate. No such result was achieved.

Wooster reports that the first settlement, in California, was run by an "official and legally responsible" Board of Directors assisted by a "sort of colony executive committee" of the heads of the various departments. Every night this board of managers held a meeting to survey accomplishments and to plan the next day's activities. For a brief period, the colonists also made use of two informal bodies, the General Assembly and the Commission, which had no definite powers and, Wooster asserts, served only to render the government chaotic.

According to the prospectus, the same administrative plan was adopted in Louisiana, after several other ideas had been tried but rejected.

[26] *Ibid.*, p. 103. [27] *Ibid.*, p. 216. [28] *Ibid.*, pp. 139 ff.

The Board of Directors, the controlling authority, was elected annually by resident and nonresident stockholders. Nonresidents could vote by proxy. This Board consisted of nine members: the President, Vice-President, Executive Director, Chairman of the Board, Secretary, Treasurer, Industrial Superintendent, Assistant Industrial Superintendent, and Accountant.[29]

The Board of Directors appointed a general manager, responsible both to the Board and to the colonists and always subject to recall. The general manager appointed his assistant and the foremen of the various agricultural and industrial departments. The qualifications required of a foreman were efficiency, fairness, loyalty, and ability to get along with other members.

This administrative arrangement had three objectives: (1) to give the workers control of property; (2) to stimulate effort and efficiency; (3) to develop in the members a sense of responsibility.

Incorporated under the laws of Louisiana, New Llano adopted standard by-laws of corporations, except that the voting power of each member was limited to the 2,000 shares required for full membership.

The directors rejected the idea of a constitution. They held that "the fewer inflexible rules and regulations, the greater is the harmony." But the members were expected to live up to the spirit of the Declaration of Principles, of which we quote the most significant:

> The rights of the community shall be paramount over those of any individual.
>
> Liberty of action is permissible only when it does not restrict the liberty of another.
>
> Things used productively must be owned collectively.
>
> Law is a restriction of liberty and is just only when operated for the benefit of the community at large.
>
> Values created by the community shall be vested in the community alone.
>
> Only by identifying his interests and pleasures with those of others can man find real happiness.

These are lofty principles, but unfortunately, the colony failed to practice them. According to Brown, the New Llano management was anything but democratic. He mentions bureaucrats "who were accustomed to steamrolling a gesture of freedom with votes from members long nonresident."[30] He accuses John T. Pickett, Harri-

[29] Sid Young, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

[30] Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 209.

man's successor, of serious violations of the democratic principle. Pickett controlled the colony from 1920 until he was ousted in 1936. Brown quotes him as saying: "I'd rather work with a bunch of morons . . . than with a lot of over-educated kickers." [31] Pickett was a most zealous advocate of the principle that all members should share in the resources of the colony. "Yet," says Brown, "as a manager he lives in a much better house, eats much, much better food and has both shoes and shoelaces, a hat, a Ford, and even barbecue sandwiches, Coca-Cola, bananas, and raisin pie when he's on the road, as all bourgeois leaders before him." [32] No wonder Pickett was called a dictator by the opposition! Brown asserts that "90 per cent of the colonists were almost as economically cowed by leaders who lived on what little fat there was, as are the rest of us by our masters on the outside." [33]

Evaluation

Thus the colonists of New Llano *shared, but not equally.* The discrepancy between principles and practice seems to have pervaded all their activities. This failure may in part be explained by the normal course of human friction, but much of the difficulty undoubtedly arose from a faulty plan of cooperation. Originally, as Gide reports, Job Harriman, being a Marxist, "intended to set up a collectivist form of society in the proper sense of the term." [34] Actually, he adopted opportunistic policies to expand the colony, instead of working for slow but sure progress. To gain members he lowered admission standards until New Llano became merely a producers' cooperative. The settlers practiced only segmental cooperation, which may help to achieve certain economic ends but cannot establish a new way of life.

Thus, unlike the Hutterite communities, New Llano maintained private property rights. Cooperative ownership was restricted to the means of production: land, machinery, livestock. All household goods, houses, automobiles, and the like remained private property. The individual's sole contribution to the community was the admission fee of $2,000. He retained whatever funds and property he owned outside the colony. Such a policy strengthened the individual's faith in private property rights. The aim was to free him of economic insecurity. Instead, the maintenance of these

[31] *Ibid.*, p. 132.
[32] *Ibid.*, p. 131.
[33] *Ibid.*, p. 216.
[34] Gide, *op. cit.*, p. 203.

rights impelled members to consider their self-interest in questions relating to common property.

To be sure, among the members there was a group of sincere idealists who tried hard to practice the principles of cooperation, but too many readily forgot their pledge and strove to get all they could for themselves in exchange for the least possible effort. And what were the consequences? A veteran member sums them up as "dissatisfaction, splits, loafing by some – overwork by others, farm left to scanty operators, the dairy a disgrace for quantity and quality of milk, and starved-looking cows. In short, Llano turned out to be a deep quicksand that engulfed everything and every decent colonist."[35] And the reason? New Llano, like all other socio-reformistic communities, tried to combine individualism with voluntary cooperative production, and merely demonstrated the truth of Gide's statement: "If private property gives rise to conflict, so does community of property, and even more frequently."[36] In New Llano, private property was the source of numerous conflicts, but to these were added highly virulent clashes about shared property, which, as Gide says, "is the greatest source of dissension between co-proprietors, and . . . is therefore limited by law to a short period."[37]

Compromise and appeasement were characteristic of cooperation as practiced in New Llano. At first, in California, the members worked for wages: $4 for an eight-hour work-day, of which one dollar might be withheld as part of the membership fee. Later, a system of time slips was inaugurated. These slips were turned in for printed or metal tokens used in buying consumers' goods. Both methods of compensation, however, were unsatisfactory. In 1920 the colonists abolished wage payments and adopted the system of "exchange of services." Every adult member worked a specified number of hours daily. In return he received all available goods he needed. But members were expected to practice "judicious economy."[38]

Although everybody had to work, no formal rules were promulgated. The pledge signed by each new member was the sole contract, but on its reverse side was printed a supplementary pledge, also to be signed by the novitiate. This included a waiver and re-

[35] Comments taken from letter of a member.

[36] Gide, *op. cit.*, p. 11. [37] *Ibid.*

[38] See *The Gateway to Freedom*, *op. cit.*

nouncement of "any and all right . . . under the Workmen's Compensation of the State of Louisiana" and a statement that, if injured at work in the colony the member would not call upon his comrades "for redress of the sum."

Workers were shifted "from one place to another by the management," but so far as possible the individual's interests were taken into consideration. The individual had many kinds of agricultural and industrial work to choose from. The colonists grew sweet potatoes, peanuts, pecans, sugar cane, forage crops, and vegetables. Their orchards supplied plums, peaches, berries, figs, pomegranates, persimmons, pears, apples, and grapes. They raised dairy cattle, hogs, poultry, goats, horses, and mules, and owned an apiary. The main industrial enterprises, listed in the prospectus, were the ice plant (also used for cold storage), print shop, brick mill, harness shop, shops for wagon-making and repairing, crate factory, machine shop and garage, bakery, cannery, sawmill, broom factory, steam laundry, and shoe-repair shop. The colony also ran a hotel, hospital, and dental clinic. Foremen, appointed by the general manager, supervised the work.

Attitudes of workers varied. The serious idealists and the cooperatively minded were ready to do their best. But the enormous turnover of members and the failure to select applicants carefully (especially after 1929, when the depression brought multitudes "driven into cooperation" by hard times) had a serious effect on morale. One member writes: "Those of us who knew how to do anything were too often hooted down, and not given attention, and still less credit for cooperative-mindedness."

These conditions reduced efficiency and the output of consumers' goods. Although the prospectus boasted that "the individual needs of food, clothing, and shelter are taken care of through the colony service industries," the group lacked many necessities of life.

New Llano had no communal housing. At first, shacks in the abandoned sawmill town were rented to members. Eventually, members with sufficient means built houses on land owned by the community, and these houses were their private property. The resulting inequalities in housing created such bitterness that private ownership had to be abolished. Thereafter, houses were built and kept in repair by woodworking departments of the colony. No charge was made for land or construction. The prospectus states that the houses had "all improvements" such as piped water, elec-

tricity, and ice for the kitchen. But one member's letter, dated November, 1933, and quoted by Brown, contradicts the prospectus: " . . . life is still very crude here and lacking in many comforts. The very appearance of our so-called village is depressing and unfinished. Some good comfortable houses . . . but several shacks still stand."

Members could dine either at home or in the central hall of the hotel, but they preferred to dine at home. Brown reports that less than one-third of the colonists ate breakfast together. He adds: " . . . it is probable that of those breakfasting at home, either on hotel food brought to them by some family messenger, or on better provender at their own expense, a good many, especially women, have never seen the six-thirty line-up." And he found that those who chose to eat at the community table were "the shock troops of cooperation, the jolt-absorbers that cushioned life a little for others."

Invited to visit the colony, Brown was warned that he would need "a little cash" to supply himself with "necessities or comforts the colony cannot furnish. Especially in the way of food."

"Shoes and clothing," says the prospectus, "are kept in repair at the shoe and tailor shops. Other wearing apparel is made at the sewing rooms." The colonists wore no special type of dress. New Llano had nothing like the comfortable distinctive clothes of the Hutterites. Members who came with decent outfits remained presentable much longer than others, who were as a rule shabbily clothed and barefoot. Shoes were almost impossible to obtain. Ironic remarks were circulated that it was even more difficult to get shoe-laces than shoes.

In satisfying intellectual and recreational needs, New Llano probably did its best work. The varied backgrounds of members furnished plentiful topics for discussion. Adult education courses were offered in practically every conceivable subject. Volunteers taught a great variety of courses: modern languages, including Esperanto, psychical research, physical culture, dancing, singing, the playing of musical instruments. Within the limits of available teaching skill, the list of courses was frequently revised in accordance with the interests of members. Entertainment included choral singing, orchestras, chamber music, dances, an excellent theatre (relying chiefly on gifted members), movies, and other sorts of free diversion. The library was "the most popular spot in the colony"

with "a stock of books . . . better than that of many towns twenty times its size . . . "[39] Unlike the Hutterite communities, New Llano, desiring a richer intellectual and aesthetic life, was not in the least ascetic. The colony's social life was its most attractive aspect, so that one member, when asked if he enjoyed life at Llano, could reply truthfully: "They charge me a dollar a day at the hotel, and the bed and grub is hardly worth that – but still, the social life here is worth ten dollars a day of anybody's money."[40]

Dental and hospital services were free to members. Though no set provisions were made for invalids or aged members, individuals unable to work, and with no one to support them, were cared for by the colony. Funeral and burial expenses were also contributed by the community.

The limited type of cooperation practiced did not appreciably modify family life. Critics considered the colonists morally lax, but they could offer no evidence in support of this opinion. And certainly New Llano did its utmost to provide adequate education. In the daytime the children remained apart from adults in the so-called "Kid Kolony" located on a plot of forty acres about a mile from the main settlement. Here were three buildings: a central building in which the children ate their meals; the schoolhouse; and an apartment house for teachers. Every morning the children were taken to the Kid Kolony by bus. In the evening, they were taken home to their parents.

The educational program was designed to prepare children for life and endow them with the cooperative spirit. The school system, recognized by state authorities, included a kindergarten, of the Montessori type, for children two to three years of age, an elementary school, and a high school. The high school, though supervised by experienced educators, suffered from high turnover of staff. Classes were held eight hours daily except Sunday, with special emphasis on vocational training, which, so far as possible, was taught through practice rather than theory. Under expert guidance the children cultivated a garden, grew vegetables, and took care of poultry and goats. Older students and some of the teachers worked four hours daily in one of the industrial shops.

For a while the school system was supplemented by Commonwealth College and Academy, a college which, though not part of the colony, remained in close contact with the group. Common-

[39] Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

[40] *Ibid.*, p. 174.

wealth was planned to be a school for "hand and brain workers," and was supposed to offer a three-year course to a carefully selected student body. The college opened in 1923 with a one-year course. According to Wooster, applications for admission greatly exceeded available facilities. Nevertheless, the college gave only one course and then moved to a site near Mena, Arkansas, where it remained for some years.[41]

The educational program of New Llano, though considered the most useful and efficient of the local enterprises, did not achieve its objectives. The schools provided a progressive type of education but failed to equip the new generation to take over and improve the social system of the colony. Many of the youngsters decided to give up cooperative living. As Brown observes: " . . . this educational experiment has been entirely successful – but only up to adolescence. Then the kids become curious about the capitalist world. So they're inclined to leave the colony as soon as they can, to try for a taste of fuller life, and though their early training of cooperation does help make them good citizens on the outside, it's pretty much wasted so far as building up the colony is concerned." [42]

The causes of wholesale desertion in New Llano are evident: the poverty of the group, and its inability to provide the conveniences and pleasures which the children had learned about from the movies, radio, and colorful advertisements.

Failure of the Experiment

The motives leading to the establishment of New Llano were lofty but purely rational. The purpose was to prove that cooperation is more efficient than competition as a system generating human happiness. This the colony failed to demonstrate. The eventual difficulty seemed to be the inability on the part of these colonists to develop a society financially sound.

As a cooperative stock company New Llano derived its principal income from membership fees, on which a down payment had to be made at the time of admission. Funds were also solicited from sympathizers, who made their contributions either as outright donations or as loans. The diversified products of agriculture and industry were expected to satisfy the colonists' needs and to bring in some profit. But there was always confusion in the records, as between the administration and the stockholders. The members com-

[41] *Ibid.*, p. 222. [42] *Ibid.*, p. 189.

plained of red-tape and bureaucracy, on the one hand, and of the failure to keep a reliable accounting system on the other. In consequent disputes the State Supreme Court ruled that the colony could not be held responsible for such negligence. When a discontented member sued the community, claiming that it was run as a stockholders' association and that he had a right to dividends, the lower court granted his contentions, but the Supreme Court, according to Gide, decided in favor of the colony, on the ground that "its object was not the distribution of dividends, but the procuring of better conditions of life for its members residing in the colony . . . Since all it produced was consumed on the spot there was no need to keep books, and no complaint could be made against it if its bookkeeping was not quite in order." [43] Small wonder that anyone trying to analyze the colony's finances can find little more than hints and undocumented assertions!

But of one thing we can be sure. The experiment ended as one of the worst financial failures in the history of such enterprises. At all times the colonists were in financial difficulty. They lived from hand to mouth, at the lowest standard, and left practically no assets when the business was finally liquidated.

The sixty-five members who moved from California to Louisiana in 1917 took along a debt of $145,000.[44] The first days in Louisiana were also marked by financial difficulties. When the Texans seceded, taking much of the property away, the colony was saved only by the intercession of a member who loaned the group $6,000. In the nick of time, he made the first down payment for the land; otherwise, the enterprise would have been foreclosed.

New Llano, in fact, seems to have been consistently unlucky in money matters. Gide cites a report that by 1928 the colony had lost $800,000! This sum is staggering, regardless of mitigating circumstances such as "ill-luck, especially in the shape of two fires, like those of Brook Farm and the Phalanx – a strange brotherhood in misfortune." [45]

These two disasters testify to the fact that experiments based on rational argument often arouse fanatical opposition. In New Llano such opposition was supplied by the "Brushgang," so named because the first group of malcontents, organized at about the same time as the original settlement in California, "wore their bits of

[43] Gide, *op. cit.*, pp. 206 f. [44] Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 16.
[45] Gide, *op. cit.*, p. 205.

sage brush as a badge of secret fraternity."[46] The Brushgang remained with the colony to the very end. From their opposition stemmed most of the violent conflicts, particularly in the latter stages of the experiment. With emotional frenzy like that of frustrated love turned into hate, the Brushgang strove to destroy the institutions they were unable to control. For instance, Pickett reported to Brown: "Why, we worked two years and built a beautiful three-story office and store building – and then some malcontent set fire to it one night. All that work gone up in the red flare of one match."[47]

The depression years not only brought an influx of unemployed, but simultaneously cut off financial help from outside the colony. By November, 1937, the community had completely deteriorated. The situation at this point is described in a letter from a disillusioned member:

> No food for the past week except sweet potatoes . . . we have had no light for two months . . . there is very little money coming in and what little there is, Pickett takes for his own use.

The letter continues:

> Successful farmers hereabout assure me that they get 200 bushels sweets [sweet potatoes] an acre, of which more than half grade as No. 1 and bring 10 cents to one dollar per bushel. Years ago we had a letter from the Canal Zone asking that we ship ten cars sweet. Efficient management here would have had us in position to fill order, as it is, we've never raised enough for our own food supply.[48]

These comments may sound like the griping of an embittered critic, but they were confirmed by events. Futile efforts were made to interest the F.S.A. in taking over the colony, which was at last forced into receivership in 1939. The conditions prevailing at this stage are epitomized in the following statement of the court:

> . . . Proceedings under section 75 of the Bankruptcy Act were instituted in this matter in U.S. District Court for the Western District of Louisiana, but were finally dismissed because the state court had been handling the matter in receivership for a long period of time, much of the property had been sold and affairs were in such a condition that it did not appear any reasonable rehabilitation could be had under the Bankruptcy Law. Some seven or eight hundred mem-

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[46] Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 126. [47] *Ibid.*, p. 177. [48] *Ibid.*, p. 229.

> bers, who had been part of the organization from time to time, were scattered over the country so that no election of officers could be held and only a few persons were available. There had been an internal row in the colony, which resulted in the ousting of the board, and the subsequent holding of the state court became final, that those who were afterward put in were not legally authorized to serve.[49]

The last sentence refers to a revolt (in 1935) whereby Pickett was deposed and a new Board of Directors elected. The Supervising Conciliation Commissioner of the Western District of Louisiana recalls an inventory of property (for purposes of liquidation) with "assets to the approximate value of $300,000." But if we can believe Pickett, the last duly elected manager, "every stick they owned was mortgaged."[50]

Lesson of New Llano

The lesson of New Llano is of almost negative value. In virtually all its enterprises (with the possible exception of education) New Llano failed. Had it been founded on a workable theory, and organized efficiently, even its failures might have contributed significantly to our understanding of the cooperative community. But the basic objective of New Llano – to build in accord with the principles of economic determinism and the materialistic and mechanistic approach to life – proved, as Harriman conceded, an unsound foundation for the colony. Describing the settlement, he admits that "theories or intellectual concepts play a very small part in our reactions,"[51] and that "the ethical and spiritual quality . . . becomes of primary importance in community life."[52] It is interesting that a serious economist like Harriman should have put into practice the Marxist theories and found them lacking, for success, in "ethical and spiritual quality." In other words, according to him, the emotional core, so striking among the religious Hutterites, was lacking in his scientific formula.

But, beyond that, it is clear that Harriman's objective did not have a fair trial. In fact it was soon seriously violated, when, according to theory, the colony should have immediately dissolved. But instead New Llano operated for fifteen years on a compromise

[49] Decision dated April 17, 1941, and in the files of the Rural Settlement Institute.

[50] Quoted by Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 187.

[51] Wooster, *op. cit.*, p. v.

[52] *Ibid.*, p. viii.

of principles. The colonists ignored Harriman's suggestion that "mental and ethical tests must be made part of the questionnaire and then a period of probation be required, during which time the real state of feelings of the applicant may be ascertained." Had this recommendation been put into practice, the majority of the members might have been expelled and the entire experiment revamped.

Harriman also discovered another psychological factor that might well have been considered in the selection of new members. He found that people accustomed to assuming responsibility were better cooperators than many of those drawn from the lowest-income group: "Another fact that struck at the very foundation of our theory was that the line between the selfish and the unselfish was not drawn between the classes according to our philosophy . . . We found to our surprise that there were more selfish men among the poor, in proportion to their number, than there were among the well-to-do." [53]

This candour on the part of a disillusioned leader has in itself value for the planner of the modern cooperative settlement. Procedures should be adapted to the character and experience of the participants. And New Llano makes it clear that in practicing cooperation, there must be no yielding to expediency. These colonists adopted a form of partial or segmental cooperation in some matters and complete or comprehensive cooperation in others. They tried to combine both types indiscriminately. The absence of a consistent plan accounts for their failure.

The failure of New Llano does not, however, affect the validity of cooperation as a way of life – these colonists cannot boast of "having well tried and failed." On the social side – in their educational programs, in their awakening of the individual to the possibilities of new enterprise in the fields of philosophy, of art and science, their contribution surpasses that of the Hutterites. But by every other standard, and especially by that of economic success, the value of their experiment is negative: they demonstrated what must *not* be done in the practice of cooperation.

[53] *Ibid.*, p. v.

CHAPTER IV

THE SUNRISE COMMUNITY

Though possibly not so intended, the Sunrise Cooperative Farm Community of Jewish settlers was almost a replica of New Llano. Comparisons, therefore, between New Llano and the Sunrise experiment, which was on a smaller scale and much shorter-lived, should prove illuminating.

Identical motives led to the establishing of both colonies. In both of them, the idea of founding a cooperative settlement to eradicate all the evils of society, originated with leaders of a politically radical background. In both cases, the proposed community was to be the first of many such – an example for others to follow.

There were minor differences. New Llano had one founder, Job Harriman. Sunrise had two founders: Eli Greenblatt, a practical-minded man of seventy; and Joseph Cohen, then in his late fifties, with a record of anarchist activities. Both of these men, through their contacts with Jewish workers inclined to political radicalism, soon found enough prospective members and funds to justify purchase of a suitable farm. On June 27, 1933, they bought Prairie Farm, at a price of $198,000. The farm consisted of 9,000 acres and included three Michigan villages: Alicia, Pitcairn, and Clawsdale. It was considered "one of the most fertile in Michigan" and was located near excellent market outlets. Saginaw, with a population of 80,000 was only 18 miles away; Flint, 30 miles; and Detroit, 80 miles. Yet, despite satisfactory operation of the farm, the community had to be liquidated, and in 1936 was acquired by the Federal Resettlement Administration (predecessor of the F.S.A.).[54]

[54] Data in this chapter are based on reports of a qualified observer assigned by the Jewish Agricultural Society, 1933, 1934, and 1935. Other sources include newspaper articles, and the court decision of Judge Arthur J. Tuttle, August,

The property at Sunrise consisted of about 9,000 acres of land: 500 acres of timberland, 5,000 acres of pasture, and 3,500 acres of tillable land. Distributed in various parts of the three villages (each not far distant from the others) were eighty buildings, most of the structures being in the main village, Alicia. Here were the living quarters, business establishments, post-office, public school, and children's center; also three electric pump houses, the blacksmith's shop, gas station, carpenter's shop, central kitchen, dining-hall, and bakery. In this village, too, were to be found the stables and grain elevators. The peppermint distillery, and the barn for hogs (for some time this Jewish community did not use this building), were located in Pitcairn, and the sheep barns, with space for 4,000 sheep, at Clawsdale.

Sunrise had the great advantage of being on cultivated land. From the crops of over 2,000 acres the colonists could depend on an initial return amounting to $51,000. During the second year, the area under cultivation was increased to more than 3,000 acres, but, in the third year was reduced to about 2,500 acres. The main crops were peppermint, sugar beets, oats, barley, sweet corn, wheat clover, alfalfa, timothy, soya beans, potatoes, and garden vegetables.

The stock taken over consisted of 61 pure-bred Belgian horses, 20 cows, 7 heifers, and 3,000 sheep. This inventory increased, in the second year, to 80 horses, 48 milking cows, and 50 young stock. The number of sheep remained the same, but 300 laying chickens and 600 pullets were added, besides 5 milking goats and 10 young goats. Finally, despite religious taboos, 18 brood sows and 70 pigs were kept on the premises. The colony achieved remarkable results in stock breeding and at the Saginaw County Fair of 1935 won 15 ribbons as well as money prizes totalling $150.

The Membership at Sunrise

It is interesting that in this community the anarchists under Cohen prevailed. The membership at Sunrise was almost exclusively Jewish, this being the principal difference from New Llano. Sunrise, however, had a much smaller enrollment. During the first year there were 216 individuals (81 members), of whom the majority were middle-aged, but there were 55 children under sixteen and 25

1936, in the case of Charles Sanders v. Sunrise Community. Relevant facts were also obtained through courtesy of the Labadie Collection of the University of Michigan.

young men and women between sixteen and thirty-five. Despite the large turnover the total increased, during the second year, to 88 families, or 312 individuals: 70 children under sixteen, 80 young people sixteen to thirty, and the older group of 85 men and 77 women. In addition, the colony housed 19 residents who were not members, and, during the summer of the second year, 20 temporary residents of school age. In the third summer, the latter group increased to a hundred.

In the beginning, vaguely radical convictions and ability to pay the admission fee were the only qualifications required of prospective members. Subsequently, the colonists, realizing the unfortunate results of this meagre policy, agreed on a medical examination and tests of moral and social qualities. But there is no evidence that these procedures were applied. Persons who should never have been admitted caused much dissension. Various remedial measures were suggested. Some proposed that all new admissions be suspended for one year; others wanted to set an age limit of forty years. But financial needs and the thirst for expansion impelled the colonists to reject these suggestions.

The admission fees, less than at New Llano and to be paid in cash, were $500 for an unmarried adult, $600 for a couple, and $150 for a child. In addition, the members were expected to bring with them some furniture, enough clothing for one year, and pin money. In some cases, only part of the cash fee was demanded. Small families, with children over ten, were granted generous terms.

Of the pioneer members, 40 per cent had been workers in the needle trades; most of the others were painters or carpenters, but the group included two butchers, a shoemaker, a baker, three graduate teachers, a civil engineer, and a chemist. The most homogeneous and enterprising were thirty young people (between twenty-five and thirty-two years of age) with some college education. As intellectuals in a colony of radical workers, however, they seem to have had little influence, for they were not chosen to fill administrative posts.

Only a few of the members had been farmers. As at New Llano, individuals joined the community chiefly because they were unable to obtain satisfactory employment elsewhere. The depression virtually forced them into cooperative ventures. Although the leaders had been members of anarchist organizations (in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and Chicago) the rank and file constituted an ex-

tremely heterogeneous group: socialists, members of the Arbeiter Ring, or of the Jewish National Workers Alliance, Poale Zionists, and "just a few" communists.

These divergent political loyalties caused most of the dissensions and, eventually, the failure of the entire enterprise. And all the antagonisms crystallized on the one issue: language. Members with a nationalistic view insisted on Yiddish as the accepted language of the community, but the anarchists objected. Only after pressure exerted by the Yiddish press and after the nationalists, having given up the fight, had deserted *en masse,* were classes in Yiddish organized.

Meanwhile, the nationalists had used obstructionist tactics reminiscent of New Llano's Brushgang. When the colony published a newspaper, the *Sunrise News,* in English and in Yiddish, the opposition issued an exclusively Yiddish newspaper which Cohen did his utmost to eliminate. Embittered members went so far as to denounce the colony to the federal authorities, from whom subsidies had been obtained.

These dissensions caused a high turnover, as did also the inability of some members to adjust themselves to hard work. At the end of the first year, 16 families (33 members) quit. At the end of the second year, 20 more families left the colony. Included in the latter group was Eli Greenblatt, co-founder, who was expelled. Afterward, he and other ousted colonists were accused of agitating against the community and of demanding that federal agencies refuse to grant sorely needed funds. Significantly, during the first two years, one-third of the pioneer settlers withdrew.

Sunrise, being more collectivistic than New Llano, refused to give refunds to seceding members. But this rule was qualified: the Executive Committee was empowered to grant rebates; in practice, members leaving the colony got a rebate of one-half their fee and a promise that the balance would also be refunded in due time.

The high turnover prevailing in all three years of the experiment did not reduce the total enrollment, for new applicants promptly replaced the members who resigned.

Community Life

New Llano and Sunrise had the same type of administrative organization. At Sunrise, authority was theoretically in the hands of an elected body, the Executive Committee, but was actually

exercised by one individual, Joseph Cohen. The Executive Committee, of thirteen members, functioned on a departmental basis. Seven departments were established initially: the building, field, livestock, machinery, educational, grievance, and labor departments, each autonomous in its own sphere. The labor department, consisting of the chairmen of all other departments, met daily to determine each worker's next assignment, whereas the Executive Committee met only once every two weeks.

This arrangement was later modified into twenty-one departments (nine field, three garden, and nine technical) each of which constructed its own plans, rules, and regulations. In contacts with the community as a whole, each department was represented by its chairman, and in this way complete decentralization was attained. When a concerted effort was needed, as at harvest time, such decentralization greatly reduced efficiency.

The colonists had been fortunate enough to obtain the services of the former manager of the farm, who was thoroughly familiar with local conditions and needs. For this reason, the farm was efficiently run, though still better results might have been achieved through more frequent consultations with agriculturalists of the county, the state, and the federal government.

As at New Llano, the sailing was by no means smooth for the management: opposition developed at the very start, and dissidents accused the leaders of aiming to set up a dictatorship. Trouble began with the first elections to the Executive Committee, when Joseph Cohen, dissatisfied with the vote, refused to accept the returns and succeeded in putting through his demand for new elections. Thereafter, his opponents called him a high-handed tyrant.

The Sunrise colony and New Llano differ most, perhaps, in the degree of cooperation practiced. In all these cooperative communities, supposedly, every physically fit adult had to do manual work of some kind. At Sunrise this code was rigorously observed, while New Llano was more lax in its rules.

The Sunrise daily schedule was as follows: up at 6.30 to 7.00; breakfast, 7.00 to 7.30; work, 8.00 to lunch hour at noon; work again, to 5.00 or 5.30; supper at 7.00. At first, the farm work required the time of one-third of the adult members, but efficiency increased until in the third year of the experiment, only one-fourth of them were needed on the farm. The rest were free to take care of other jobs. No one was paid for working, though fines were

imposed for absenteeism. Fines of $2.50 per day for unexcused absence, and $1.50 for leaving work without permission, were deducted from the member's monthly allowance for incidentals – five to ten dollars. For certain tasks, outside help was procured, but the colonists intended to dispense with this as soon as the membership had sufficiently increased. Women were accepted as full-fledged coworkers; some helped with farm work; others took care of the cooking, baking, and cleaning.

The worker received two kinds of compensation: the services he needed and additional equity in the common property of the group.

Like the Hutterites but unlike New Llano, Sunrise adopted comprehensive cooperation in all activities. The cooking was done in a central kitchen, and the members ate in the dining-hall (many resented this, but economy prevented a change). The colonists got most of their food from the farm. For bread they had their own bakery. Only groceries had to be purchased outside and could be bought at wholesale.

The houses, as among the Hutterites, resembled college dormitories. The unmarried adult, or a childless couple, was given a private room but had to share the washroom, showers, and living room with everyone else in the house. Some of the houses were old and had to be remodeled. In addition, there were several new buildings to be constructed.

One member, a physician, provided medical services, but also did some farm work. During the second year, a resident nurse joined the group, and one of the houses was turned into a fairly adequate hospital.

Most of the members had difficulty at first in adjusting themselves to regular hours and strenuous physical labor. Consequently, a state of continuous fatigue left them little energy for recreation. But even after increased efficiency had reduced the average hours of work, the social and intellectual life of the community seems to have been unusually scanty for a group of Jewish liberals. As much as the strenuous labor, the intensive strife of factions must be held responsible for such deficiencies. The library was ignored at first, and never much used, for each insisted on reading the literature (generally newspapers and periodicals) of his own political faction.

In the last year of the experiment, however, after clamoring in vain for a more stimulating recreational program, the young people of the colony decided to take matters into their own hands. They

invited lecturers from the Extension Service of the Michigan Agricultural College; organized sports activities; and arranged frequent trips to the moving pictures.

As in most of the cooperative communities, children received the best possible care and attention. The thirty-five children, of whom the youngest was four years old, were supervised by college-trained teachers, members of the community. The latter adopted progressive educational principles in their attempt to develop in the children the qualities required for cooperative living on the farm. The curriculum of the public elementary school at Sunrise complied with state courses of study. In the high school, which, for a time, lacked suitable equipment, sessions were held only twice a week. Eventually, the situation improved somewhat but was never satisfactory. On the whole, the young people, apparently not intrigued by life in the community, tended to drift away at the first opportunity.

Economic Results

Unlike New Llano, Sunrise achieved economic adequacy. For a while, the colonists encountered considerable difficulty because of insufficient capital. But available reports indicate that the stock and the area under cultivation increased annually for three years. Unfortunately, a slump in prices and a wet season caused much damage in the third year of the experiment. These disasters, coupled with business mismanagement and internal dissensions, brought the project to a premature end. But in contrast to New Llano, the Sunrise colony, at the time of disbanding, was in good financial condition. This is indicated by the fact that the Rural Settlement Administration purchased the property for use in its own program.

During the three years of its existence, the community added a great deal of new machinery and implements. It built a barn costing $8,000, erected an industrial building, with shops for carpentry, canning, metal work, and tailoring (the latter shop was valued at $3,000), and constructed a well-equipped creamery. The settlers also remodeled several cottages. They installed a heating system in the larger buildings and used one structure as a high school and library.

Although the farm was financially successful, the income from crops and membership fees did not suffice to pay all the current

expenses. Consequently, during its second year the colony applied to the Farm Credit Administration for a loan of $12,500. This agency granted a loan (though less than the amount requested) against a mortgage on crops and stock. In addition, loans to a total of $40,000 were obtained from other federal and state agencies, while from the A.A.A. the community acquired gratis several hundred head of stock and a quantity of canned goods. (It was in connection with this gift that a disgruntled member accused the management of having sold some of the A.A.A. stock, but investigation by the agency failed to substantiate his accusation.)

In addition to these obligations, when the founders, Greenblatt and Cohen, acquired Prairie Farm, they agreed to pay $198,000, with a down payment of $33,000, and a mortgage of $125,000. Accumulated arrears in taxes totalled $40,000; the state of Michigan gave the colonists permission to pay these tax arrears in installments to be spread over a number of years, and at the same time granted a substantial reduction in annual taxes. Despite these concessions, the colonists, although they could always pay the interest on the mortgage, had insufficient money for taxes. In the last year of the colony, Cohen asked the state to cancel unpaid taxes, but his appeal was rejected.

Conclusive data on the economic efficiency of the community are unavailable, but we know that of the major crops the farm produced 25 per cent more than the state average and that grain production was just about average. We are justified in concluding that the colony seems, on the whole, to have been as efficient as the original farm taken over by Sunrise. Doubtless, the capable manager, who served both the original and the new settlements, deserves much of the credit for this accomplishment.

Evaluation

The short life of the experiment, however, makes a general evaluation difficult. Its term was too brief for the achievement of significant results. It teaches us the same lessons as New Llano, but applies them to an almost exclusively Jewish group. Once again we find that a cooperative community, this time under excellent physical conditions, failed because the participants were not carefully selected. The Sunrise colony also supports our surmise that purely rationalistic theories as the main basis of a cooperative community are apt to produce internal dissensions. This seems to be so, no

matter how great the degree of cooperation practiced. With free discussion encouraged, the eradication of many economic difficulties is apparently supplanted by intensified intellectual friction. Instead of worrying about food and clothing, the members tend to debate ideological subtleties, until the energy saved through cooperation is expended in factional disputes. How to save liberty of opinion within the communal frame is a crucial question in postwar cooperative resettlement.

From our study of New Llano and the Sunrise colony we may, at least, conclude that participants in a cooperative who have been unable to cope with their problems in a competitive society, will build on rather weak foundations. Those who failed competitively because of personal inadequacy are rarely successful cooperatively. Those, on the other hand, who failed through no inadaptability to competition, tend to break away from the cooperative community as soon as they find suitable employment elsewhere. Thus, the Sunrise community, organized during the depression, dissolved with the first signs of business recovery.

It is noteworthy that the women and the young people became best adjusted to their new conditions. At Sunrise, as at New Llano, among the middle-aged, the members who had formerly earned good incomes or, as in the case of the small-scale merchant, had learned to stand on their own feet, made a better showing than those whose occupation had conditioned them to taking orders from others. Nor is this surprising, in view of the basic nature of comprehensive cooperation. In the cooperative community each member is actually a partner in the enterprise and is, therefore, expected to display certain qualities characteristic of an owner: initiative, self-reliance, persistence against difficulties, ability to anticipate problems and to plan accordingly. Obviously, men who had developed such qualities before joining a cooperative community would be apt to adjust themselves to the new situation more readily than those accustomed to a subordinate role.

At Sunrise, however, intellectuals – that is, people from the more "privileged" classes – were in a peculiar position. Although they formed a rather homogeneous group, they failed to agree on any program of concerted action and, consequently, remained without influence and were excluded from managerial responsibilities. This anomaly may have resulted from the proletarian character of the community. A reversal of social status may have occurred, making

the manual laborer more highly respected than the white-collar worker, a point of view which the intellectuals themselves eagerly adopted.

Note, finally, that this settlement, composed exclusively of Jews, displayed as much heterogeneity as any other community. At any rate, ideological differences, personal temperaments, and political and religious creeds proved to be stronger influences than ethnic uniformity. It is evident that discord is not materially reduced by mere similarity of occupational background, social status, race, religion, and nationality. Perhaps the secret of success in cooperative living lies in personal compatibility developed through *mutual spontaneous choice of associates.* The main problem is to bring together the individuals most willing and able to cooperate with each other.

CHAPTER V

THE F.S.A. COOPERATIVE CORPORATION FARMS

The modern cooperative community resembles that of the past in many ways, but there are major differences in the mode of origin and in the basic objectives. The older experiments were motivated essentially by religious creeds or socio-reformistic zeal. The modern settlement, on the other hand, has developed into a kind of new socio-economic organization, used by governmental, or semi-governmental, agencies to improve rural conditions. In practice, the aim may be the total reorganization of society, as in Soviet Russia; the rehabilitation of the low-income farmer, as in the United States or Mexico. Or it may be the occupational redistribution of the unemployed, as in England; or, as in Palestine, the solution of crucial problems which individual effort has been unable to solve. In all these cases, the primary motive is predominantly economic.

Certain characteristics of the cooperative communities of the past, however, are retained by contemporary settlements. They are, in fact, based on what Rexford Tugwell has called "old Utopian ideals, born in Europe, [which] find a new practical application." [55]

A chronological treatment of these modern communities would deal first with the Kvutza, and proceed in order with the Kolkhoz, the Ejido, and the F.S.A. farms. But since our purpose here is to explore the value of the cooperative community as an American technique of postwar resettlement, we should begin with a discussion of experiments conducted in the United States. Moreover, data in English concerning the Kolkhoz and the Ejido are limited, whereas information about the F.S.A. farms is relatively abundant. Several of the latter farms have been visited and surveyed by members of the Rural Settlement Institute.[56]

[55] See Rexford G. Tugwell, *Cooperation and Resettlement* (Reprinted from *Current History*, February, 1937).

[56] See Henrik F. Infield, *Cooperative Living in Palestine* (New York: The Dryden Press, 1944) for an account of the Kvutza.

Objectives of the Farms

The primary objective of the farms organized by the *F.S.A.* (Farm Security Administration) was that of rehabilitation.[57] These recent experiments in cooperative living lasted only a few years, for they were still in the experimental stage when the United States Congress, in the spring of 1943, ordered their liquidation. As shown in Table 6, none of them was in operation prior to January, 1937.

J. W. Eaton distinguishes between two schools of thought among the administrators of the farms; one group was interested in the success of "large-scale farming"; another in "the farms as agricultural training schools." Katz mentions a third group who wanted the F.S.A. farm to provide "just-work."[58] Agricultural problems then current in the United States stimulated these three kinds of interest in cooperative farming.

The difficult economic conditions confronting American farmers, on small or medium-sized farms, during the 1930's, were reflected in official statistics of government agencies. The proportion of tenants in the farm population of the country had risen from 25 per cent in 1880 to 42 per cent in 1935. It is estimated that in some of the states the heavy debt burden of farmers had reduced their equity in their own land to little more than one-fifth of the total value, while the remaining four-fifths represented the holdings of landlords and mortgagors. Consequently, as the *President's Report (1937) on Farm Tenancy* stated, "fully half of the total farm population of the U.S. has no adequate farm security."[59] The groups affected by agricultural maladjustments included not only tenants but also farm laborers ("more than one-fourth of all persons gainfully employed in agriculture in 1939 were farm wage laborers"); families on submarginal land ("over a half million of our six and a half million farmers"); families on holdings of inadequate size; owners hopelessly in debt; and, finally, young farm people unable to

[57] Our discussion of the F.S.A. farms is based on a field study by J. W. Eaton and M. S. Katz, members of the Rural Settlement Institute. Some of the findings were published in Eaton's *Exploring Tomorrow's Agriculture* (New York: Harper and Bros., 1943).

[58] See M. S. Katz, "The Security of Cooperative Farming" (Typewritten manuscript, Rural Settlement Institute).

[59] See *Farm Tenancy—Report of the President's Committee* (Washington, D.C., February, 1937), p. 3.

TABLE 6

COOPERATIVE GROUP FARMS OF THE F.S.A. AS OF MARCH, 1942

Name	Post Office	State	Beginning of Operations	Farm Security Administration Region	Total Acreage	Tillable Acreage	Acreage per Member	No. of Full-Time Members	Color of Members
Bois D'Arc Farm	Hughesville	Missouri	March 1938	3	2,230	1,840	124	18	White.
Deshee Farm	Vincennes	Indiana	do	3	2,771	2,500	73	38	Do.
Hillview Farm	La Monte	Missouri	do	3	2,617	2,066	260	10	Do.
Pollock Ferry Mutual Association.	Halifax	North Carolina	January 1938	4	2,331	485	291	8	Do.
Red Banks Mutual Association.	Pembroke	do	October 1938	4	1,720	834(?)	115	15	Indian.
Scuppernong Mutual Association.	Creswell	do	September 1938	4	5,090	2,371	242	21	White.
Weston Mutual Association	do	do	January 1939	4	1,557	1,043	195	8	Negro.
Flint River Farms	Montezuma	Georgia	September 1938	5	1,726	1,238	43	40	Do.
Lake Dick Farm	Altheimer	Arkansas	March 1938	6	3,670	2,288	147	25	White.
Marcella Farm	Mileston	Mississippi	March 1940	6	1,587	1,420	44	36	Negro.
Terrebonne Association	Schriever	Louisiana	January 1939	6	5,988	2,545	101	59	White.
Burlington Mutual Aid Corporation.	Burlington	North Dakota	March 1937	7	1,960	513	280	7	Do.
Enterprise Non-Stock Cooperative Association.	Scottsbluff	Nebraska	January 1937; reorganized 1941.	7	480	399	96	5	Do.
Falls City Farmstead Non-Stock Cooperative Association.	Falls City	do	June 1937	7	517	360	86	5	Do.
Loup Non-Stock Cooperative Association.	Sioux City	do	January 1937; reorganized 1941.	7	795	450	159	6	Do.
Sioux Falls Farmstead Cooperative Association.	Sioux Falls	South Dakota	June 1937	7	820	700	137	6	Do.
Two Rivers Non-Stock Cooperative Association.	Waterloo	Nebraska	November 1938	7	1,449	1,331	104	14	Do.
Camelback Farms	Phoenix	Arizona	May 1938	9	204	204	80	*	Do.
Casa Grande Valley Farms	Florence	do	March 1938	9	5,000	3,200	81	62	Do.
Chandler Farms	Chandler	do	April 1938	9	313	295	45	9	Do.
Mineral King Farms	Visalia	California	March 1938	9	529	485	59	10	Do.
Thornton Farms	Thornton	do	May 1938	9	285	262	57	5	Do.
Total					43,639	26,829		407	

* Employs nonmembers mostly.

purchase farms.[60] According to the report, the causes of maladjustment were: (1) "excessive mobility . . . in the spring of 1935 there were more than a third (34.2 per cent) of the 2,865,000 tenant farmers . . . who had occupied their present farms only 1 year"; (2) speculation, and exploitation of the soil; and (3) a faulty system of land tenure.

The plight of all these farm groups, "whose insecurity is a threat to the integrity of rural life," [61] was brought to a climax in the depression. The same period saw the emergence of the New Deal Administration, prepared to assume responsibility for ameliorating the worst evils of the depression and ready to attack the causes. Due consideration was accorded the low-income farmers. The recommendations of experts were adopted, such as, for example, the recommendation that in certain areas "more emphasis should be placed on production for home use supplemented by the development of cooperative community enterprises." [62] It was further held that "certain economic disadvantages of the family-size farm can be overcome through cooperative ownership of the more expensive types of farm machinery and breeding stock, and through cooperative buying, processing, marketing." Finally, the report suggested that "in some cases cooperative groups may well be aided to acquire land by purchase and long lease for subleasing to group members," i.e., *that cooperative communities be established.*[63]

In support of this recommendation, the report stressed two advantages of cooperative farming: first, "cooperative organization would serve the functions of a no-profit-seeking landlord, working in the interest of its members"; and, second, "such an arrangement would relieve federal agencies of much responsibility for management." [64]

The experts further advised that the Resettlement Administration, which had been transferred to the Department of Agriculture, be made the nucleus of a new agency to administer these and related experiments, and to be known as the Farm Security Administration "in order to better describe the activities recommended." [65]

These recommendations were accepted by Congress, and the F.S.A. began to contribute significantly to the relief of low-income farmers of the United States. Experiments in cooperative farming comprised a relatively small part of the entire program, but they were

[60] Ibid., p. 4.
[61] *Ibid.*
[62] *Ibid.*, p. 13.
[63] *Ibid.*
[64] *Ibid.*
[65] *Ibid.*, p. 11.

extensive enough to constitute a vital test of comprehensive cooperation. From January, 1937, to March of 1942, the F.S.A. organized twenty-two such farms. In each case the members formed a cooperative corporation, and their units can thus be designated as "cooperative corporation farms." [66]

Though established in twelve states, the farms centered in the South and Southwest. (See Table 6.) A total of 407 [67] full-time members joined, and the tillable land amounted to 26,829 acres. In July, 1943, the F.S.A. was reported to have planned to sell eleven of the cooperative farms to the groups of participating members; the other ten farms were to be discontinued as cooperatives and the land distributed among individuals. The F.S.A. intended to serve only as a creditor of the groups purchasing the farms. Managerial functions were to be taken over by employees instead of by government personnel.

Our present analysis of these corporations will be limited to the period of F.S.A. supervision and will be based chiefly on government reports and on data concerning three farms (Deshee, Indiana, Hillview, Missouri, and Bois d'Arc, Missouri) which were visited by members of the Rural Settlement Institute.

The Membership

The F.S.A. cooperative corporation farms were made up chiefly of *low-income farmers.* They formed "an association of a number of farm families who operate jointly a large-scale farming enterprise and who equitably share the returns of their group effort." [68] The F.S.A. did not organize groups before providing facilities, but prepared the necessary equipment first and then selected the settlers. To clarify procedures of selection, the Bureau of Agricultural Economics published a research report of the Resettlement Administration on requirements for admission.[69] Among eleven qualifications the following were listed: "technical knowledge of farming, cooperative wife, and harmonious family life, good health, character, cooperative ability."

[66] See Eaton, *op. cit.*, p. 36, note 2.

[67] In March, 1943, shortly before the order to liquidate, the number of families was reported to be 537.

[68] See Eaton, *op. cit.*, Chapter XIII.

[69] See John B. Holt, "An Analysis of Methods and Criteria Used in Selecting Families for Colonization Projects," *Social Research Report* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, F.S.A., and Bureau of Agricultural Economics, September, 1937).

In practice, however, the F.S.A. seems to have been guided more by administrative considerations than by research findings. Since the farms were part of a program of rural rehabilitation, the first requirement was that the prospective settler be destitute. Among other stipulations were the following:

(1) The applicant had to be a citizen of the United States and a resident of the state containing the farm he wished to join.

(2) Preference was given to fathers between twenty-five and forty, with less than six children but with none over twelve years of age.

(3) To prevent the formation of cliques, the farms were not to admit families related to each other.

(4) The applicant should have had experience or have developed skills useful in large-scale farming.

(5) Families heavily in debt would be admitted only if they could show reasonable prospects of meeting their obligations.

The process of admission had to be initiated by the farmer himself, and the first step was to make formal application to the local office of the F.S.A. An official of this agency then interviewed the applicant, and obtained supplemental information from his neighbors. In the case of a cooperative farm already established, the applicant was interviewed by its Board of Directors. If the vote of the Board were favorable and approved by both the local and the regional offices of the F.S.A., his application was accepted.

Racial characteristics were disregarded. There were no admission fees; most of the applicants came from the relief rolls. As shown in Table 6, seventeen farms were run by white members, four by Negroes, and one by Indians.

Through its admission requirements, the F.S.A. intended to organize only those individuals who, once rid of economic and psychological handicaps, could develop completely cooperative attitudes. But how effective were the methods of selection? The rate of turnover is a significant index, when supplemented by data concerning admission standards and causes of withdrawals. Such data could be secured for only the three farms visited by members of the Rural Settlement Institute. (See Table 7, based on figures compiled by Katz.)

Turnover on these farms was high, about 30 per cent at Deshee and Bois d'Arc, and more than 50 per cent at Hillview. These figures should not, however, be considered representative; they

TABLE 7

NUMBER OF ACCEPTANCES AND WITHDRAWALS, ANNUALLY, ON THREE FARMS (1938–1941, INCLUSIVE)

Name of Farm	Year	Acceptances	Withdrawals
Deshee	1938	22	0
	1939	16	1
	1940	6	6
	1941	21	16
Bois d'Arc	1938	14	0
	1939	6	3
	1940	3	1
	1941	5	6
Hillview	1938	15	3
	1939	3	1
	1940	3	5
	1941	3	4

refer only to the three farms visited. Furthermore, we have no data on turnover in similar enterprises at the same stage of development. A seemingly high turnover might be found normal by comparison with other experiments. Again, as Eaton points out, withdrawals do not necessarily signify failure of the individuals or of the farm. Rehabilitation was the main objective, and a member who obtained a good job or purchased a farm of his own might have been rehabilitated by the F.S.A. farm. On the other hand, withdrawals, we must admit, prove that cooperative farming, as here practiced, was less attractive to many settlers than profit-making opportunities.

The chief causes of withdrawals were as follows: (1) the desire of the individual to manage his own farm; (2) inability to get along with other members, a difficulty most frequent among the women; (3) an opportunity to obtain a more attractive job; (4) the idea that the neighbors held the "government farm for reliefers" in low esteem; and (5) a chance to earn high wages in war plants.

In contrast to the situation on these cooperative farms, the other resettlement projects of the F.S.A. had a negligible turnover. Such projects were developed as homestead communities, as in La Farge, Missouri, Gee's Bend, Georgia, and other localities.[70]

Though withdrawals from cooperative farms were common, ex-

[70] Eaton, *op. cit.*, p. 97, note 5.

pulsions were rare. The process of expulsion was deliberately made complicated. The request had to be presented to the Board of Directors, and the accused was accorded every opportunity to defend himself. If the Board, after hearing the defense, considered the complaint justified, they had to call a general meeting of members to adjudge the case. A majority vote for expulsion was subject to approval by the F.S.A. In view of the absence of a probationary period for new members, this policy of making expulsion difficult may have been unsound, but evidently, the F.S.A. wanted the members to develop a sense of security. Lack of it was considered a major cause of maladjustment.

Regardless of whether he quit or was expelled, the member could claim a share of whatever profits had accrued to the association during the period of his membership. He could also claim part of any increase in the net worth of the farm, though he had no right to demand cash payment for his claim, unless the farm were in a sound financial condition.

In the case of two farms visited by Katz and Eaton, the main cause of dissatisfaction developed out of the relations between workers and managers. Many of the workers did not believe in the cooperative aspects of the enterprise. They assumed that "their corporations were cooperative in name only" and considered themselves "just laborers on a government farm instead of on one individually owned." In a third community, however, it was found that the management encouraged the members to develop a sense of responsibility. Here, relationships were altogether satisfactory, and work efficiency high. One may conclude that, despite administrative difficulties and red-tape, supervisors endowed with foresight and ability can contribute much to the success of such cooperative ventures.

The Government as Farm Manager

As in the case of other cooperative farms sponsored by government agencies, the Federal Government became the farm manager. The task of organizing the F.S.A. farms was entrusted to an assigned personnel. The staff of the F.S.A. chose the locations, determined both the size of each farm and its varied activities, and contracted for labor to erect the buildings and make the soil ready for cultivation. After these preparations, the F.S.A. officials selected and organized the members of the corporations. At the outset the latter had little or no responsibility.

These paternalistic measures, especially as relating to the provision of ready-made facilities, seem to have nullified the laudable intentions of the F.S.A. It was a degree of paternalism contrary to the spirit of voluntary cooperation, and proved unsatisfactory to all concerned. In 1939, therefore, changes were made which, in some cases, permitted the settlers to exercise their initiative. Before final selection of a farm, prospective members were aided in forming a corporation, improving the land, and other preparations for settlement. This gave them a larger share in the building of their community.

A problem, however, arose out of the equivocal administrative character of the farms. They combined features of producers' cooperatives with those of processing, marketing, and consumers' cooperatives. But the fact that the operating capital was supplied by government agencies kept them from being genuine cooperatives. Under these circumstances, the best solution seemed to be incorporation, which meant loss of the tax exemption enjoyed by co-operatives. Another difficulty, and one that might conceivably have led to litigation, lay in the fact that the farms paid dividends on the basis of hours of labor, a policy not strictly in accordance with the laws regulating corporations.

In any enterprise sponsored by a government agency, a large, complicated administrative set-up seems unavoidable. These F.S.A. farms were a case in point. Many problems were solved in unprecedented ways, but procedures were necessarily cumbersome. The desire to give cooperation a fair trial was further hampered by hostile Congressmen, who kept a watchful eye on the use of public funds.

All three types of administrators — those interested in enabling the low-income farmer to profit by the modern methods of large-scale agriculture; those favoring the experiment as a training school for backward farm laborers; [71] and those who merely wanted to provide work for the unemployed — all conceded that the farms had to be cooperative in character and that self-direction by the members was accordingly essential. But inasmuch as the members usually came from the least successful strata of the farm population, self-direction might involve the danger of hasty or ill-advised action. Moreover, the F.S.A., as an agency dependent on Congressional appropriations, had to be cautious; so a compromise solution was

[71] *Ibid.*, p. 82.

worked out, whereby these corporations were to be autonomous only after the members had become the sole owners of the farms. Until then the F.S.A. retained the right to supervise the management of the farms. A twofold interlocking administrative system was established: an internal one directed chiefly by the members of the corporations, and an external one provided by the F.S.A.

The internal system of management was truly cooperative. Authority was vested in the general meeting of members, each of whom held only one share of stock and, as in any genuine cooperative, had only one vote. No one could own a share who did not work on the farm. The plans and policies accepted at the general meeting were carried out by a Board of Directors and a manager, all elected officers. The Board, consisting of five members, had charge of all business transactions. It handled expenditures, prescribed the contracts between members and the corporation, and had authority to accept or reject applicants. The Board was assisted by an accountant and the farm manager; to the latter it delegated all managerial functions.

The twofold character of administration was personified by the farm manager and the accountant. They were not only employees of the farm but also representatives of the F.S.A. And they were both paid by the government agency, not by the cooperative. Small wonder that misunderstandings arose when the members' desire for autonomy clashed with the F.S.A.'s insistence on its strict controls.

Though overhead supervision of the farms was supplied by the Washington staff of the F.S.A., in the Department of Agriculture, some efforts were made on the part of the F.S.A. to decentralize federal administrative functions. The country was divided into nine regions in each of which a regional headquarters was established whose personnel conducted all F.S.A. activities in the region. The farm manager of the cooperative belonged to the regional staff, and was assisted by other members of that staff, such as the home economist. In many cases the F.S.A. also furnished secretarial help.

Under circumstances prevailing at the time this arrangement may have been justified. But with all plans and decisions subject to confirmation or rejection by outside officials, the members tended to develop a sense of futility. And the problem was aggravated by some farm managers who considered themselves bosses rather than associates. This attitude was intensified by the facts that they were actually vested with the power of a boss, and that they were often annoyed by the inefficiency of workers formerly on relief.

All the farm work was done by members, under the immediate supervision of the manager, who was "the exclusive judge in selection of personnel to be employed." In some cases the so-called "enterprise committees," of elected members and F.S.A. technical experts, prepared the work programs in considerable detail. An efficient manager always tried to assign workers to tasks for which they seemed best qualified, giving the more responsible jobs to trustworthy, experienced members. He could penalize a worker for breach of discipline (the penalty might be a temporary lay-off), but the worker, as noted above, could then appeal to the Board of Directors, who might rescind unjustified decisions. If the Board failed to do this, final resort could be had to the F.S.A.

Gradual Development of Cooperation

Administrative difficulties developed most often from the novel relations involved in comprehensive cooperation. It took time for members and managers to learn that cooperation means doing things together on equal footing. Progress was slow.

The degree of cooperation practiced on these farms depended on not only psychological and economic but also on political considerations. Those who planned the enterprises knew that a drastic departure from the traditional individualistic farm would be attacked by conservative people; it seemed advisable to go slowly and to "delegate to a group only such functions as can be performed more efficiently by a group than by individuals." [72] A gradual development was envisaged, as indicated by explicit instructions to regional officials: "Only those cooperatives which are clearly necessary to serve the project" were to be established at once; all others would be delayed "until the community manager and the clients on the project initiate requests for their establishment." [73] This precaution was expected to contradict in advance any accusation of radicalism.

The attitude of the "client," i.e., of the low-income farmer whose social participation may have been limited to barn-raising or husking bees, had also to be considered. Officials pointed out that "the first requisite of the sound operation of a cooperative association is an interested and informed membership." [74] So here, too, progress

[72] See F.S.A. Data 28, "Cooperative Activities on Resettlement Type Projects," November, 1937. Also, Eaton, *op. cit.*, p. 80, note 1.

[73] *Ibid.* [74] *Ibid.*

had to be slow. Instruction "in the general theory and basic operating principles of cooperation" would have to precede any extensive cooperative activities. Accordingly, at the start cooperation was restricted to large-scale farming, while elsewhere individualism prevailed. Each family had its own house and plot of land, prepared its own food, bought its own clothing. Whatever group action developed in these areas of living was purely spontaneous and incidental.

That collectivism did not make much headway was implicit in the labor programs. All work was supposed to be done by the members themselves. But the rules did not prohibit the employment of outside labor, not even on a full-time and permanent basis, and by the end of 1941 all but one of the farms employed such labor.

True, the members were technically not laborers but part-owners of the farm. But since they were not really the owners, they could not share equally in anything except the goods and services used by the group. As to the disposition of cash income, diverse practices prevailed. Theoretically, the pay received for work was not a form of wages but an advance against the anticipated share of the profit; this pay was to be supplemented by dividends to be distributed at the end of the year. Three methods of handling these "labor advances on dividends" can be discerned:

(1) The rate per hour of work remained the same, independent of the type of work done. The majority of the farms used this method of "equal labor advance." Each worker was given a timesheet and received his pay either by the week or the month.

(2) The rate depended on the member's skill as well as on the number of hours he worked. This "unequal labor advance," adopted by several farms, gave some workers twice the hourly rate of others. The dividends, however, were to be distributed irrespective of the type of work; each member's dividend was to depend on the total hours he had worked. But the failure to pay dividends at all, aroused skepticism as to the cooperative character of these corporations.

(3) At Marcella Farms, no labor advance was paid. Instead, each family received a loan from the F.S.A., in twelve monthly installments. The rate of interest was 3 per cent. At the end of the year, the Board of Directors distributed a major part of the cash surplus to the members on the basis of the total hours each had worked. With his dividend, the member could repay the loan; also, if he had

earned enough profit, he could reduce the amount of his annual borrowing until able to dispense altogether with loans. This procedure was supposed to strengthen his sense of responsibility and his feeling of ownership.

These three kinds of compensation applied only to members. Outside labor and resident non-members, such as the wives and children of members, were paid in cash at an hourly or daily rate. Treated as wage earners, they actually made more than the advances paid to the members, who were supposed to share in the profits. Such a system caused much confusion, especially because the families of members, besides receiving higher wage rates, shared indirectly in the privileges and even the profits of the enterprise.

The cash income varied widely, with a minimum of $225 at Flint River and a maximum of $1,020 at the Burlington Mutual Association. On nearly all the farms, however, cash income in 1941 exceeded that of 1940.[75] The following estimates of average income are based on data relating to the cash incomes of heads of families, the market value of housing facilities supplied to the members, and the amount of free goods provided:

Region III	Western Northeast	$775.00
Region IV, V, VI	South	625.00
Region VII	Middle West	775.00
Region IX	Far West	1,000.00

The conditions of work, though not uniform, compared favorably with those of the individually owned farms of the same locality. The regulations drawn up for each cooperative stipulated a rate of pay not lower than that of the district; also, a limit to working hours; protection for all employees, members or non-members, through workmen's compensation insurance; and provisions for safety and sanitation. Workers were guaranteed the right of collective bargaining. Another regulation, prohibiting the employment of children under sixteen, aroused the resentment of some parents who wanted their children to acquire the same work experience available on a privately owned farm.

On all but five of these cooperatives, the members paid no rent. The houses, wooden structures of simple, attractive design, had each a living room and two or three bedrooms. Most of the kitchens had running water. A few houses were equipped with toilets, the

[75] Eaton, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

majority with sanitary outhouses. Windows and doors were well screened. All buildings were wired for electricity. Construction costs varied considerably, ranging from $1,070 for each house at Flint River, to $2,015 and $3,112 at Casa Grande.

Although the members were supposed to buy their own furniture, in many cases they had to borrow money or obtain grants from the F.S.A. for the purchase of beds, kitchen utensils, and other household goods. To many of the members the housing seemed the most satisfactory feature of cooperative farming, and their homes may have been "the best they ever lived in."[76] The money they saved on rent, they could spend on furniture, radios, and automobiles.

Each family prepared its own meals but had ample facilities to raise much of the food they needed. The houses had plenty of land, sometimes as much as six acres, for growing vegetables, berries, etc. As a rule, the farm supplied, gratis, tools, fertilizers, seed, and work animals. On some of the southern farms, the workers kept a few hogs, chickens, and a cow. On farms in the North and West, however, settlers were not allowed to keep livestock but were compensated by being supplied with a certain quantity of milk and pork, either free or at cost. Gasoline, sugar, meat, and other items were purchased in bulk by the administration, and resold at wholesale prices to the members.

Besides these facilities, many of the settlers, especially on the southern farms, received training in dietary habits. From the home economist or the farm manager they learned to plant vegetables and to prepare them properly for the table.

Clothing was not purchased cooperatively. The individual used his own judgment. Members wore about the same kinds of clothes as neighboring farmers.

Recreational opportunities were superior to those available on the average individualistic farm. After work the members could do as they liked, and they thoroughly enjoyed their weekends. Free vacations could be arranged. In the community building, adult education classes were held, as well as dances and other social gatherings, though the response to these was not especially enthusiastic. The members, coming from low-income families, included few joiners of clubs or fraternal lodges. Thus, the cooperative farm gave the settlers a chance to widen their social range. They could run for office, serve on committees, join agricultural extension

[76] *Ibid.*, p. 159.

clubs, and attend general meetings, while the women could join homemakers' clubs, and their children form neighborhood clubs. But, on the whole, the members preferred informal recreational activities: the men went hunting or fishing together; most of the members liked to visit, say on Sundays, with friends in neighboring villages.

Since the majority of settlers had previously lived near the farm, they kept their contacts with their church, school, and other institutions. Occasionally, where members had migrated from other regions, as for instance, on one farm which the neighbors facetiously called "Little Russia," social friction developed through antagonistic neighbors. But this was an exception to the generally cordial relations between the F.S.A. workers and the adjacent community.

Within the settlements, some of the families were inclined to form social cliques of their own – a trend opposed by the administrators, who feared lest pressure groups interfere with policies accepted by the majority. But no action was taken against such cliques unless they seemed about to disrupt the entire program of the farm.

Many of the applicants for admission showed the effects of years of poverty. Malnutrition, hookworm, pellagra, and malaria were so common that frequently rehabilitation had to begin with medical care. To provide medical services at a price adjusted to the means of the members, the F.S.A. organized "Medical Cooperatives," for the exclusive benefit of its clientele. Members could belong by paying the annual fee of $24 in twelve monthly installments, and thus obtain medical care, hospitalization, and drugs. In some of the farms, too, a voluntary health insurance plan was instituted. At Deshee, for instance, dues of ten cents a week entitled the sick member to compensation of one dollar a day after two days of illness. But the F.S.A. farms failed to provide for chronic ill health, total incapacity, old age, or death. Because of the low average age of members (on two of the farms visited, the averages were respectively 33 and 34.4 years) this problem, however, remained largely academic.

Members accustomed to a more or less isolated life had to become adjusted to a new social pattern involving less privacy and, for most of them, a new status for women. The F.S.A. considered the wife the social equal of her husband. This gave her a significant role, and a more varied, meaningful experience. Though not admitted

to membership, and thus without the right to vote, she could participate in the work of certain committees and serve as an integral part of the larger community. On the other hand, as the sole provider, the husband remained head of the family.

In education the farms accepted traditional patterns. Adult members could attend the same classes as other F.S.A. clients. The children attended local public schools. The F.S.A. at times contributed substantial funds to the schools of the district, instead of paying taxes. In some cases they even built a new school and turned it over to the public. In this way the Federal Government provided the children on cooperative farms with education equal or superior to the average. Unfortunately, however, the curriculum was not designed with a view to preparing the new generation for cooperative living.

The Government as Creditor

Note the distinction between the long-range aims of the F.S.A. and the immediate program outlined for these cooperative farms. The long-range plans assumed that the farmer would not only be rehabilitated but would eventually become part-owner of a large-scale cooperative enterprise. Meanwhile, however, the F.S.A., with its financial and administrative controls, functioned as owner of the property and creditor of the cooperatives. This supposedly temporary relationship between tenant and owner persisted until the premature liquidation of the farms. The land and most of the buildings had been leased from the F.S.A. under a five-year rental contract, subject to renewal by mutual agreement. Special leases of forty to ninety-nine years were granted only to those cooperatives which, aided by loans from the F.S.A., had introduced substantial improvements in land and property.

The rental charges varied. During the initial stages, when success of the farms was uncertain, the rent ranged between a stipulated minimum and maximum rate, according to the financial prospects of each farm. The minimum rent sufficed to cover local taxes, usually paid by the F.S.A., insurance premiums on stock and buildings, and the cost of maintenance and repair. The maximum rent amounted to 3 per cent of the appraised value of the leased property. Generally the charge, somewhere between the minimum and maximum, and determined either on a dollar-per-acre basis or on a share-crop basis, amounted to, say, one-fifth of the value of

the cotton crop or one-third the value of the feed crop. The rent was payable in cash, and if the one-third share-crop value exceeded the maximum rent in any year, the surplus had to be set aside toward future payments of the maximum rent.

Since no investment or admission fee was required of the members, for operating capital the farms had to depend on loans from the F.S.A. Loans were granted for the purchase of livestock, machinery, and other equipment.

Enough equipment was advanced to new farms to enable them to operate until the first crops were sold. The time limit on loans was ten years, and the interest rate 3 per cent, but any part of the money used for public improvements such as clearing land, building roads, and the like, was free of interest. Nor did the F.S.A. exact amortization during the first few years, pending the full development of the farm. Sometimes even the interest was not paid. Of the twenty-two farms, six failed to pay the interest due December 31, 1941, while seven farms neglected to make the scheduled repayments of principal.

Operating capital per family ranged from $925 at Flint River, Georgia, to $4,943 at Chandler Farms, California, with a median of about $3,000. Operating capital per acre ranged from $10 at Pollock Ferry, North Carolina, to $110 at Chandler Farms. The causes of this marked variation, not definitely known, may have included differences in type of farming, in work efficiency, wage standards, and condition of the soil.

Besides granting loans, the F.S.A. supplied gratis the services of its personnel, including the farm manager, until such time as the farm could support its own staff. For Casa Grande these services were valued at approximately $10,000 per year.[77]

A decisive factor in the economic analysis of these farms is, of course, the relation of investment to returns. Since they were planned as long-term enterprises on a large scale, and prematurely liquidated, we cannot arrive at valid conclusions as to their potential profit. Data on initial costs might be cited as well as the inadequate records of annual income, but the over-all picture could be interpreted either favorably or unfavorably, according to the point of view.

Eaton's figures, however, based on F.S.A. official reports, and "fairly reliable, although not always clear," give us some idea of

[77] *Ibid.*, p. 136, note 5.

the financial condition of the enterprises. Eaton states that the lack of clarity in the original figures may be due to the slightly different accounting systems of the various farms, and to the inaccuracy of membership records.

The initial investment per family varied considerably with each farm. At Flint River the cost of land per family amounted to $1,228, as compared with $5,442 (more than four times as much) at Casa Grande. The cost of farm improvements varied about 300 per cent: $2,286 in one instance, $6,009 in the other. The difference in cost of land is explained by the variation in acreage and quality of soil. The difference in the cost of farm improvements is attributable to the quality of the improvements made, and to the type of labor employed.

With these differences in investment, cash income per family varied correspondingly – at the rate of about 400 per cent, as between the two farms mentioned above: $130 at Flint River, and $540 at Casa Grande.

Officials of the F.S.A. seem to have conceded that the initial investment was excessive – not so much the cost of the land as the cost of labor and improvements. According to Eton, they felt that had efficient business practices been used, they could have reduced these costs by 10 to 55 per cent. But it was incumbent on the F.S.A to employ relief workers. Furthermore, when the F.S.A. took over projects previously administered by other agencies, it discontinued the practice of charging these projects with part of the overhead costs of its regional and local offices. Consequently, the actual bookkeeping value of the farms appeared to be less than the cash invested. In some cases, as at Casa Grande, the difference between the two is about 40 per cent of the investment. At Casa Grande the cost of establishing the farm was $687,032, but its actual value was estimated to be $414,930.

Equally inconclusive, and subject to diverse interpretation, are the figures used to compare the cost of establishing cooperative farms with that of organizing individual units. According to George L. Oliver of the F.S.A., the cost of the former was two-fifths that of the latter; but other available data show that this ratio does not always obtain. A group of individual F.S.A. farms cost twice as much as the neighboring Flint River cooperative; at Osage Farm the situation was reversed, and the cooperatives were more costly.

On the positive side, we know that these farms were endowed

with the pre-requisites of successful farming: enough land, even if not always the best, to provide subsistence; adequate machinery; high-grade livestock. Granted that the workers were not, as a rule, particularly skilled, nevertheless the large-scale operations in diversified farming helped them to make the most of whatever skills they possessed. Also, the great majority of settlements had the advantage of effective, capable leadership.

After painstaking and detailed analyses, Katz concludes that the three F.S.A. cooperatives which we have been discussing, had a greater productivity per farm than the state average. Labor efficiency, on the other hand, judged by the output per man-hour of work, seemed to him lower than the average. One might say, then, that the cooperative farmers with their greater resources, though less efficient work, achieved higher productivity than the individual farmers.

We have also available records for 1941 by which to judge the progress of these cooperative corporations. In that year, thirteen of the twenty farms whose accounts were analyzed, showed an excess of assets over liabilities; eleven of the thirteen earned more than in the preceding year. Among the remaining seven, the total losses for 1941 were about one-half as much as in 1940. Two farms, Falls City and Chandler, actually made a profit in 1941, though not enough to compensate for previous deficits.[78] If this general trend had continued, all the farms would probably have begun to operate profitably within a brief period of time. After liquidation of the enterprises, eleven farms were sold to the associations of members, a significant indication of anticipated success.

Evaluation

In an economic evaluation of these short-lived experiments of the F.S.A., it is clear that our deductions will have to be concerned with potential accomplishments. But in a general social evaluation, we have actual achievements to consider.

To what extent did these farms succeed in rehabilitating the members? Eaton has formulated ten criteria of success in rural rehabilitation:

(1) Material well-being as related to food, housing, clothing, luxuries.

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78 *Ibid.*, pp. 151, 152, Tables XIa and XIb.

(2) Assured income through continuous employment and job security.

(3) Satisfactory conditions of work, including reasonable hours, vacations and sick leaves, safety precautions and accident insurance.

(4) Adequate wages, and insurance against unemployment, crop failures, old age, illness, and death.

(5) Economic democracy, with the right of workers to bargain collectively and to participate in control.

(6) Good health, with adequate medical care available for all.

(7) Education for children, youth, and adults.

(8) Leisure time.

(9) Social participation for all individuals in an integrated society.

(10) Opportunity for self-development in economic, social, and political affairs.

In view of our findings relative to these cooperative farms, Eaton's conclusion that they would eventually satisfy all his criteria seems amply justified. Undoubtedly, as instruments of rural habilitation these cooperatives pioneered significantly.

If the United States enjoys uninterrupted prosperity during the postwar period, it will not have to institute such relief measures. There are those, however, who anticipate a recurrence of conditions which in the 1930's rendered three million farm families destitute. Should a comparable depression ensue, Americans may wish that the F.S.A. farms had not been liquidated – similar enterprises may have to be undertaken again. In the meantime large funds have been lost as a result of liquidation. Also, continuance of the cooperatives would have provided additional experience most useful to future programs.

The aim of the F.S.A., moreover, was not merely to set up a rehabilitation program for individual impoverished farmers. It also had in mind the enrichment of American agricultural resources. Eventually the use of cooperative large-scale farming would, it was believed, alleviate or eradicate the unsound agricultural conditions that had developed in the United States. Farmers using old-fashioned methods had been unable to cope with the problems of industrialized agriculture, the so-called "agricultural revolution." On the average American farm of small or medium size, social retardation and technological inefficiency had obstructed progress; and very few farmers had enough capital for large-scale operations. The cooperative farm seemed an excellent solution: the individual,

unable to compete with great "factories in the field," could unite his resources with those of other farmers and thus obtain the most modern machinery, services, and results.

Since the farms were part of a relief program, the F.S.A. at first expected merely to test the potential values of cooperative farming. In this, of course, they were restricted not only as to duration but also as to scope of the experiment. A real test would have required that the members be recruited, not from a list of people on relief, but from a cross-section of capable farm workers interested in cooperation and disposed to give the new system a fair trial. The results remain, therefore, inconclusive. Notwithstanding, advocates of cooperative farming insist that the F.S.A. achievements, under these adverse circumstances, have proved the value of the system. Opponents, on the other hand, maintain that the unfavorable view was corroborated by the action of Congress in liquidating the farms.

Despite these inconclusive results, it is our opinion that the F.S.A. experience may well facilitate the proper administration of similar programs in the future. Shortcomings, caused chiefly by ill-advised government policies, should be eradicated. Yet government sponsorship should not necessarily be considered a disadvantage. In testing any new type of socio-economic organization, experiments can be conducted more effectively by a government agency, provided with adequate resources, than by private institutions whose funds and personnel are limited. But governments should take care not to nullify the value of appropriations by imposing burdensome conditions on such experiments.

Thus, as we have seen, to comply with federal regulations, the F.S.A. had to select its clientele on the basis of need. Ability to get along with other people was disregarded. The agency was compelled to ignore the principle that cooperation should grow spontaneously among willing, congenial participants. Furthermore, the F.S.A failed to stimulate the settlers to use their own initiative: at the very start, large sums were expended to provide each group with ready-made buildings and other facilities, with the result that the members developed a feeling of dependency. To build these facilities the F.S.A., contradicting its own philosophy of cooperation, employed relief workers, and the consequent high cost of building did not help to convince the public that cooperative effort is more economical than individual competition.

Eaton and Katz agree that the *absence of a cooperative spirit* was

the outstanding weakness of the F.S.A. farms. From this, all other major difficulties followed, including friction between F.S.A. officials and the settlers. Many of the latter deserted to take up individual farming, without having had a chance to learn the real advantages to be derived from comprehensive cooperation.

CHAPTER VI

OTHER F.S.A. PROJECTS

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Besides the cooperative farms, the F.S.A. organized two other types of project worth considering in postwar resettlement. They are the Land-Leasing or Purchasing Associations, and the Greenbelt Communities.

Land-Leasing Associations

The Land-Leasing or Purchasing Associations vary somewhat in technique from that of the cooperative farms. Congress, though refusing to liquidate these associations, passed a law directing that no new enterprises of the kind be instituted during 1943. No definite policy was promulgated, however, governing those previously organized.

Land-Leasing Associations,[79] which developed in areas "where the land tenure is especially unstable,"[80] are designed to help tenants and sharecroppers on southern plantations to obtain greater security of land tenure. Only tenant farmers, accepted as clients of the F.S.A., may participate in these projects.

Their organization observed the following procedure. Assisted by the F.S.A., the tenant farmers drew up a charter and by-laws. They subscribed $1 each for a share of stock in the association, elected a board of directors, and organized under the laws of their state. Then the farmers leased land (often from absentee owners such as banks, insurance companies, county or state governments, or individuals) usually for periods of five to ten years, and paid

[79] See R. W. Hudgens, "The Plantation South Tries a New Way," *Land Policy Review* (November, 1940). Also, C. B. Baldwin, *Report of the Administrator of the F.S.A., 1941* (Washington, D.C.: U. S. Dept. of Agriculture, 1941).

[80] Baldwin, *op. cit.*

rent, in cash, for use of the land and buildings. In some cases, the lease included a clause giving the farmers an option of eventual purchase. Also, if sufficient land could not be leased, the F.S.A. was permitted to advance the funds for outright purchase, but in any event the association acted as the owner, and sublet tracts on a rental or sharecropping basis to its members.

Cotton acreage has been distributed according to the size of the family, on the principle that the available land should be used for the benefit of the greatest number but without sacrificing economy of production. To raise the standard of living, the F.S.A. has helped each family in homemaking and in planning the farm activities, so that enough food would be produced in addition to one or two cash crops. On each farm, the Board of Directors has appointed a trained manager to supervise the commissary, cotton gin, etc., and to aid the tenants in planning their work. The manager has generally been assisted by a supervisor of homemaking, who teaches the farmers' wives how to budget, use a heathful diet, can the garden produce, and make their own clothes.

These farmers cooperate in crop farming and in care of livestock. They have developed cooperation in the use of heavy machinery, such as grist-mills, cotton gins and tractors; in marketing and purchasing; in renting of livestock; in some instances, they run cooperative stores and repair shops. In every other way, both as producers and consumers, they follow an individualistic pattern. Members have kept all their income derived from their respective tracts, and have also shared in the profits of the association.

The F.S.A. has loaned the money for operating capital. Total loans to forty-six Land-Leasing Associations amounted to $1,337,633 in March, 1943.[81] The cash rents have been the main expenditures, though substantial sums have been spent on cooperative enterprises and on facilities for sharecropping families.

The first Land-Leasing Association began operating in the spring of 1939, and by March, 1943, the number had increased to forty-nine, with a total rented area of 134,441 acres and a membership of 1,933.[82] According to the *Research Guide*,[83] each organization admitted both white and colored applicants, and a majority of the Associations had a mixed membership. The rapid expansion of

[81] See mimeographed statement prepared for the Special Committee investigating the F.S.A., 1943.

[82] *Ibid.*

[83] Eaton and Katz, *op. cit.*, pp. 58-61.

these experiments reflected the enthusiastic attitudes of the farmers and the landowners. For the first time in their lives, many of the tenants, chiefly through their own efforts, achieved adequate security and enjoyed decent social conditions. As for the landowner, he could expect a fair return on his property, and the practice of soil conservation helped to protect his property from deterioration. Not to be ignored, in evaluating the Associations, is the fact that these results were attained at minimal cost.

In brief, the F.S.A. technique consisted in organizing destitute farmers into a partial cooperative, in order to improve their standard of living and their productivity, but without moving them out of their home communities. This system should be valuable to administrators in considering the resettlement of impoverished families whose migration will prove impossible or undesirable. At best, only a minority of uprooted Europeans can be shifted to other regions. Those who remain on the continent will need assistance in earning a livelihood, wherever they happen to be at the end of this war. These F.S.A. Associations suggest a welcome solution of the problem, in that they do not require drastic changes in the ownership of land, and are financed on a relatively small budget.

Greenbelt Communities

The F.S.A. Greenbelt Communities may likewise prove significant in planning postwar rehabilitation. They represent an attempt of the Federal Government to combine (as all cooperative communities strive to do), the most desirable features of city and country life. The F.S.A. acquired three such projects from the Resettlement Administration: at Greenbelt, Maryland, seven miles north of Washington, D.C.; at Greenhills, Ohio, five miles north of Cincinnati; and at Greendale, Wisconsin, three miles southwest of Milwaukee. The work on all three projects was finished in the summer of 1938, and in the following year each participant with his family occupied one of the 258 houses. All three settlements practice *segmental cooperation.*

The Greenbelt Communities, like the F.S.A. experiments discussed above, formed part of the rehabilitation program, but in their case the principal aim was to improve housing conditions for townspeople and farmers. The Administration [84] cited among their

[84] See *Greenbelt Communities* (Washington, D.C.: F.S.A., U. S. Dept. of Agriculture, January 25, 1940). Also, J. W. Eaton, "Can We Learn from the Greentowns?" in *Eastern States Cooperator* (November, 1942), pp. 9, 10.

objectives the following: (1) to demonstrate a new kind of community planning that would combine many advantages of both city and country life; (2) to provide adequate housing at reasonable rents, for families with moderate incomes; and (3) to give employment to thousands of the unemployed.

In planning the settlements, the administrators followed the pattern of two English "rurban" communities, Welwyn and Latchworth, but had at their disposal the resources – far superior to those of the English colonies – of the American Government. Plans were made for a residential area, the development of parks and reserves, and definite allotments of land for farming and for community use. (Table 8 shows details of these plans.)

TABLE 8

LAND ALLOTMENTS IN THREE COMMUNITIES (IN ACRES)

Name	Total Acreage	Residential Area	Land for Community Use	Parks, Farms, and Reserves
Greenbelt	3,411	120	-----	-----
Greenhills	5,930	140	1,783	4,006
Greendale	3,410	82	1,391	1,937

Greenbelt has no specific allotment for farms, whereas in each of the other two communities, more than sixty farms are to be found in the surrounding area. From these farms the settlers may purchase farm products at a discount. Residents are also given plots of land, in the outskirts of the community, for gardening.

The Greenbelt experiment has fulfilled the two objectives relating to work for the unemployed and better housing conditions. But whether it can develop genuine "rurban" communities is still a moot question. In postwar resettlement the most urgent problems will be agricultural efficiency and subsistence. For these purposes, a planned "rurban" social structure, whereby some people work in the city while others do the farming, is worthy of consideration. But such a community should perhaps be modelled on certain more primitive European settlements, like the Viennese *Schrebergarten* and the Berlin *Laubenkolonie*, rather than on the relatively comfortable Greenbelt Communities.

CHAPTER VII

THE EJIDO

Eyler N. Simpson defines the Ejido concisely: "The word *ejido* (pronounced a-hee'-do) is derived from the Latin verb *exire, exitum* – 'to go out,' 'the way out.' As originally used in Spain the term was applied to uncultivated land held collectively and located on the outskirts (on the way out) of agrarian communities. In Mexico . . . the word is used to refer to all types of land which have been restored to agricultural communities under the land reform initiated in 1915. By extension the word is also used to designate the communities possessing such lands." [85]

There are now two basic types of Ejido: in one the land is distributed among the members and farmed individually; in the other the land is owned and cultivated cooperatively. Both types are significant instruments of Mexican agrarian reform, the principal aim being to rehabilitate the low-income farmer, the peon. In our study, we shall discuss chiefly the type of Ejido practicing comprehensive cooperation.

A Liberal Policy

In exceptional cases, before 1934, Ejidos "worked as one big farm under the direction of the Administrative Committee," and a few of them worked cooperatively.[86] But government officials could not agree on the question of cooperative farming and, therefore, did not advocate ownership of land in common. The situation changed,

[85] Eyler N. Simpson, *The Ejido, Mexico's Way Out* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1937), pp. vii f. Simpson's admirable study reviews the development of the Ejido to June 1, 1934. He anticipated (see Part III of his book) many subsequent features of the Ejido.

[86] *Ibid.*, p. 470.

however, upon the election of Lazaro Cardeñas to the Presidency in 1934. Cardeñas campaigned as candidate of the National Revolutionary Party, which had accepted the so-called "Six-Year Social and Economic Plan." One of its main objectives was to administer and intensify agrarian reform through "expropriation of land for distribution to communal groups or villages." [87]

After Cardeñas was elected, this proposal became law, under the title of "Agrarian Code," and superseded all previous related legislation. To date, the most comprehensive application of the Code has been made in the Laguna region, an area of 6,000 square miles in the two states, Durango and Coahuila. According to Senior, what the government has done in this region constitutes "the world's largest attempt at collectivized agriculture on a voluntary basis." [88] If we substitute "western hemisphere" for "world," this would appear to be a correct inference. Here, in the Laguna, "160,000 peasants, until recently near-serfs, on 300 collective farms, are building a new pattern for rural civilization, based on collective ownership, cooperative work, and economic self-government." [89]

In signing the decree initiating this experiment, on October 6, 1936, Cardeñas was motivated by his own concept of the collective Ejido. He believed that the Ejido should assume two "responsibilities": (1) " . . . as a social system it must free the peasant from the exploitation to which he was subject under both the feudal and the individualistic regimes"; and (2) " . . . as a mode of agricultural production, it must yield enough to furnish the nation with its food requirements." [90]

These two aims have been instrumental in establishing collective Ejidos in other regions of Mexico, outside the Laguna area, such as Yucatan, Lower California, the Yaqui Valley of Sonora, the lower Rio Grande Valley, Michoacan, Quertaro, Morelos, Los Mochis, and El Monte.[91] According to the report of President Cardeñas to Congress, September, 1940, the Ejidos totalled 15,000 at that time, "with an aggregate area of 25,324,568 hectares, benefiting 1,442,895

[87] See Charles H. Barber, "The Land Problem in Mexico," *Foreign Agriculture*, Vol. III (November 3 and March, 1939), p. 113.

[88] See Clarence Senior, *Democracy Comes to a Cotton Kingdom — The Story of Mexico's La Laguna* (New York: The League for Industrial Democracy, 1940), p. 5.

[89] *Ibid.*

[90] See Nathaniel and Sylvia Weyl, *The Reconquest of Mexico — The Years of Lazaro Cardeñas* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1939), p. 220.

[91] Senior, *op. cit.*, pp. 5 f.

peasants (heads of families)."[92] Accepting the Weyl estimate that one-third of the Ejidos were engaged "in more or less collectivized agriculture in 1938,"[93] we may safely assume the number of collective Ejidos to be around 5,000. Of these we shall discuss only the extreme type developed in the Laguna region.

The Peon Cooperates

In these Ejidos it is the peon who cooperates. Of the total economically active population of Mexico, numbering 5,165,800 persons in 1930, there were active in agriculture 3,626,800, or 70.2 per cent. Of these, 2,534,100, or 69.9 per cent, were landless.[94] In the two states, parts of which form the Laguna region, the landless represented an even higher percentage of the population than in the country as a whole; there were 77 per cent of landless peasants in Durango, and as many as 86.7 per cent in Coahuila.[95]

The population living in the Laguna region, like that of all Mexico, is predominantly Indian[96] and belongs to the Nahuatl family. Their occupation has always been mainly agricultural; the Laguna region produces almost half of Mexico's cotton crop.[97] Before the establishment of the Ejido, the landless peons suffered a destitution peculiar to the workers on most plantations run for the profit of absentee landlords. "Company stores, company currency, credit extended in such a manner as to enslave the peons, utter lack of sanitation, paucity of education, and other detrimental human relations, even to beatings of recalcitrant workers" – this is how Senior sums up the state of affairs.[98]

The agrarian reform and the distribution of land to Ejidos, progressing none too fast in the rest of the country, hardly reached the Laguna region before 1936. Then, however, with one stroke, by force of the decree of that year, over 395,360 acres of farming land and 573,272 acres of unimproved land were distributed among 32,000 farmers.[99]

92 *Ibid.*, p. 51. 93 *Ibid.*, p. 196.

94 Simpson, *op. cit.*, p. 654, Table 45. 95 *Ibid.*

96 According to Simpson (*op. cit.*, p. 236), "nine-tenths of the population in Mexico in 1921 was either Indian or Mestizo." Only one-tenth was white, that is, Spanish or Creole.

97 Senior, *op. cit.*, p. 5. 98 *Ibid.*, p. 12.

99 See Gonzalo Blanco Macias, "The Ejido at Work," *Land Policy Review* (November, 1940), p. 18.

In this way 221 Ejidos were established. The method of selecting members was the same as that followed today by all the Ejidos. To establish a settlement, at least 20 eligible male peasants must form a group and petition the Government for land. The criteria of eligibility are as follows: the applicant must be (1) Mexican by birth; (2) over sixteen; (3) resident at least six months in the locality where the Ejido is to be formed; (4) agriculturist by profession; and (5) owner of not more than 2,500 pesos, i.e., he must be of the low-income class. Prior to August, 1937, the so-called "acasillados," or agricultural laborers, were considered ineligible; since then they are admitted to Ejidos on the same terms as other peons.[100]

Groups consisting of eligible participants may either claim land that once belonged to them or present no claim other than their landlessness. In the former case, the assignment of land is called "restoration"; in the latter, the land is expropriated from wealthy landowners (*hacendados*), and the procedure is known as "donation." In the Laguna region, where no claims to previous ownership existed, the land is always "donated."

The process of "donation" is elaborate. First, a petition signed by the group is filed with the State Governor and with the State Agrarian Commission. Next, the Governor makes the petition public and the Agrarian Commission informs the owners of the land. The Commission investigates the eligibility of the petitioners and stakes out the land in question. If the Agrarian Commission finds no cause for objection, the land is then given to the petitioning group in provisional possession. The proceedings are thereupon forwarded to the National Agrarian Advisory Board, whose job it is to draft the final order of possession. This order is signed by the President of the Republic, registered in the National Agrarian Title Registry, and published in the official gazette of the Federal Government. Finally, the landowner is asked to appear within three days to witness the delivery of the land, or to appeal against the expropriation. At every step of the procedure, the right of appeal is reserved for the landowner; he has, however, no right to stop proceedings, as he formerly could, by means of an injunction.[101] Indemnity to the landlord is paid in the form of 40-year 5 per cent agrarian bonds on the assessed tax value of the expropriated land plus ten per cent.

[100] Barber, *op. cit.*, p. 104.

[101] *Ibid.*, p. 114.

The land acquired in this way is always given to the group in *common possession*, but it is up to the members whether they decide to parcel it out or to work it collectively. In the Laguna region all the Ejidos are run collectively.

No fee for admission into an Ejido is required. There accrue, however, in the initiation of the process of land-assignment, expenses to which each petitioner has to contribute his share.

The whole process, from the filing of the petition until the final taking possession of the land, used to be protracted. It could require in some cases five years or even more,[102] and not seldom the ignorance of the peons has been exploited by irresponsible officials.[103] The drastic changes brought about by Cardeñas in the handling of land distribution and Ejido formation can be deduced from the fact that, in 1936, 221 of these farms were established in the Laguna region. Since then the number has risen to 308.

No figures are available on the turnover in the collective groups of the Laguna. As long as a member contributes his share to the common work, he remains in good standing. Expulsion is rare, and is resorted to only for these reasons: (1) continued lack of willingness to work under the direction of the elected authorities; (2) creating disorder; (3) agitation against the collective system; (4) robbery or other criminal offenses.[104]

Since all property in the collective Ejido is common and unalienable, the members actually enjoy only the use of the land and its product. It appears that no kind of compensation is conceded to those who leave an Ejido, either voluntarily or on account of expulsion.

Supervised Self-Government

Self-government is under supervision. Since the great majority of the members are not only destitute but also illiterate[105] – the rate of illiteracy in the Laguna region was 73 per cent, according to Senior – the problem of administration, presented by the Ejidos, is chiefly one of supervision and education. We find, accordingly, similarly to the F.S.A., a twofold management: one part external, supplied by the government; and the other, internal, formed from among the members of the communities themselves. Theoretically, these cooperatives are expected to grow to the point where all gov-

[102] Simpson, *op. cit.*, p. 104.
[103] *Ibid.*, p. 100.
[104] Senior, *op. cit.*, pp. 17 f.
[105] *Ibid.*, p. 28.

ernmental supervision will become unnecessary, but complete self-government seems still to be a long way off.

Supervision by government is at present fairly strict and comprehensive. Two agencies are charged with the administration of the collective Ejido: the National Agrarian Commission, which, through its State Commissions, supervises the establishment of the colony; and the National Bank of Ejido Credit, which furnishes the means, financial and otherwise, to make the settlements run. This bank, a unique feature in Mexican agricultural administration, was established by an act of the Mexican Congress in December, 1935 – with an authorized capital of 120 million pesos ($33,321,000), to be paid in full by the Federal Government before the termination of the Six-Year Plan in 1940.[106] The main functions of the National Bank are: (1) the advancing of credits to the Ejidos; (2) the "direction of land utilization"; (3) the purchase of supplies and the marketing of harvested crops for communal farmers. In practice, the Bank is, as Senior puts it, "a combination of banker, agricultural expert, family doctor, schoolteacher, lawyer, athletic director, and personal advisor." [107]

To facilitate its activities, the Bank has divided the whole Laguna region into sixteen zones and has put in charge of each a zone chief and an assistant zone chief. The direct contact with the Ejidos is kept up by the assistant zone chief, who thus forms the connecting link between the Bank and the internal administration of each Ejido.

The internal administration is in the hands of two committees, one executive, the other supervisory. The Executive Committee consists of three members and three alternates all elected by the general assembly of members. This Committee elects from among its members a President who acts as chief executive of the Ejido. The supervisory, or Vigilance Committee is also formed of three elected members and their alternates. It acts as a control body and is charged with "seeing that the land is used in the best possible manner, and that . . . investments (in machinery, mules, goods for the cooperative store, etc.) are well made." [108] All legal papers have to be signed by both the President of the Executive Committee and the Chairman of the Vigilance Committee.

106 Barber, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

107 See Senior, *op. cit.*, p. 21. Also, Nathaniel and Sylvia Weyl, *op. cit.*, pp. 194 f.

108 Senior, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

The management of the Ejido, the carrying out of the administrators' decisions, is supervised by officers elected in general assemblies. The most important of these is the work-chief. Others, subordinate to him, include the warehouseman, the corral keeper, or herdsman, the mechanic, and the manager of the cooperative store.

The work-chief assigns jobs to each member and sees that the assignments are completed. He also checks on the utilization of machinery and keeps a record of animals, feed, and fuels. But he is not an independent agent: the details of the program are decided at weekly meetings of the assistant zone chief and the two committees, at which the work-chief is present. It is his duty to organize the day-to-day execution of the program.

Rules for the conduct of members are set forth in the Model Rules For Self-Government, drawn up by the Ejido Bank after consultation with the members. Attendance at the monthly assembly is obligatory; absence is punishable by a lay-off of one to fifteen days, depending on frequency of absence. The use of insulting language in the assembly is forbidden, and the delinquent is threatened with ejection from the hall. The Model Rules also form the basis for all work relations, in and out of the Ejido, and define the responsibilities of members regarding machinery, animals, and the like.

In spite of the obvious good-will of all concerned, the functioning of the Ejidos was not too smooth at the start. Political interests, the inexperience and lack of education of the members, their unpreparedness for the new ways of work and life, caused many and frequent conflicts. To cope with these difficulties, an inter-Ejido organization was created in each zone, with an over-all body comprised of delegates from all the Ejidos of the region. Each zone elected a committee of six delegates; each of them was charged with supervision of some one branch of the general activities: education, administration, health, credit, grievances, and agricultural problems.

Similarly, the Ejidos of the whole region elected a Central Consultative Committee of Ejidatarios, consisting of eight delegates, six in charge of the same fields as the zone committee, but on a region-wide basis, and two in charge of finance and public utilities, irrigation, etc. According to Senior, these inter-Ejidal bodies, by facilitating communication between the Bank and the Ejidos, and by giving the membership an over-all organization which they had con-

trolled and in which they had confidence, were of considerable value in reducing the frequency of conflict. They were, in fact, found effective enough to be incorporated into the Agrarian Code in December, 1939, and introduced in all regions where the Ejido was numerous. At the same time the name, Central Consultative Committee, was changed to Union of Ejidal Credit Societies. In the Laguna the Union consists of delegates from the sixteen zones together with a representative of the Ejido Bank. The fields of supervision have been reduced to five: credit, commerce and insurance, agriculture, machinery, and social service, the latter including education, health, and administration. The work of the Union, like that of the Ejido Executive Committee, is checked by a Vigilance Committee.

Limited Cooperation

An analysis of the degree of cooperation practiced in the collective Ejidos shows that collectivism is still in its incipient stage. Like the F.S.A. cooperative farms, the Ejidos are merely agricultural cooperative associations. The work is done in common, but consumption and all other aspects of life remain largely individual.

Membership is based on work; those who do not want to or are unable to do a man's full job cannot remain in good standing. Work relations, regulated by the Model Rules, have to be accepted by the General Assembly of each Ejido before they become binding; hence, the discipline they imply is self-imposed. For example, the members must be ready for work at 7 A.M., and if late without reason, they may lose the right to work that day, which means loss of income. The orders of the elected work-chief must be obeyed; disobedience may be punished with loss of three workdays on the first offence, and may lead to expulsion, if repeated. Finally, the members are forbidden to accept any outside work as long as the Ejido is in need of their labor. This last rule was necessitated by the interference of landlords; they found themselves short of labor after the establishment of the Ejido, and sometimes offered higher pay to lure members away from it.[100]

Compensation for work is of three kinds: wages, piece rates, and profit sharing. Wages are unequal, differing according to skill. The unskilled receives 1.50 to 2 pesos a day; the skilled worker, a tractor operator, a well tender, earns 3 to 5 pesos. The pay of the work-

[100] Simpson, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

chief is 3 to 4 pesos. Piece rates are paid during the cotton picking season. Shares in the profit – the surplus remaining from the sale of crops after deduction of the credit repayments plus five per cent for the "social fund" – do not depend on the wage rate, but are distributed equally, depending only on the number of hours worked during the season.

No payment is made for work done on projects which serve the community as a whole, such as the construction of schools or meeting halls and the maintenance of roads; this work is obligatory.

According to Senior, the average income in the region rose from 75 centavos prior to the establishment of the Ejidos to 2.25 pesos a day in 1938 and to 3.04 pesos in 1939. Besides cash income, the members enjoy certain benefits, as, for example, a share in the produce from the community garden plot; and they are permitted to keep animals, a privilege denied in most cases to laborers on a *hacienda*.

Although life in the Ejido is still for the most part individualistic, thanks to the influence of the Ejido Bank it is slowly being modified by *the spirit of cooperation*. This is noticeable in the handling of the basic necessities of life, as well as in the use made of leisure time. Whereas houses in the region were formerly simple reed and mud huts, adobe shacks, or even caves in the river bank, "totally unfit for human occupation," the Bank has helped to finance the construction of inexpensive but modern houses. The construction program is carried out slowly, it is true, but progress can be discerned. Thus, at the time of Senior's study, 1,159 new farm houses had been built in the region.

One of the chief sanitary problems of Mexican housing is drinking water. Two years after land distribution in the Laguna, in 1939, the cause of 45 per cent of all illness and 10 per cent of all deaths was found to be unsanitary water. The next year this rate dropped to 25 per cent and 6 per cent, respectively. By the spring of 1940 about 129 new wells had been sunk, and it can be assumed that conditions have since further improved.

The peon members of the Ejido have become part-owners of the land. As *ejidatarios* they are supposed to cultivate it less for profit than for their own betterment. The Ejido Bank found it easy to convince them that the cash-crop system practiced in the region was undesirable for them. Consequently, the area previously devoted to cotton was restricted in favor of other crops, such as wheat,

alfalfa, and corn.[110] This change was an initial step in the direction of diversification in farming – the natural mode for the cooperative community. Diversification immediately resulted in a more varied diet – a matter of prime importance to the members. Their traditional fare – tortillas, frijoles, and chile – not only lacked variety and balance but was also quantitatively insufficient.[111]

Already the quantity consumed has increased. Thus, according to marketing statistics cited by Senior, corn consumption rose from 64,520 tons in 1936 to 84,896 tons in 1938. Similarly, wheat consumption increased from 18,341 tons in the same period to 22,803 tons, and that of beans from 4,585 tons to 8,068 tons. As for increase in variety, the *ejidatarios* have learned not only how to produce new types of food but also how to enjoy them. The community vegetable garden, the fishermen's cooperatives and fish-distributing cooperatives serve the one end; home education taught in adult classes serves the other.

It has, in fact, been found that the easiest way to interest people in cooperation is as consumers. With this in mind the Ejido Bank has encouraged the opening of cooperative stores in the Ejidos, of which 105 have been started. Seven have failed, "because of bad management, selling on credit," and, interestingly enough, because of robberies; the rest show a profit. A section of the Union of Ejidal Credit Societies now serves as a "rudimentary cooperative wholesale society for the consumers' cooperatives." [112]

By reducing the prices as much as 25 per cent, the stores have helped to increase the use of commodities such as beds and other furniture, tableware, and kitchen utensils. They have also helped to change the outward appearance of the peon: instead of the *huaraches* he prefers shoes, now that he can afford to buy them; he likes to put on a hat of good quality instead of the old straw variety, and he dresses his wife and children in a better grade of clothing. Thus he looks and feels better.

The center of recreational activity in the Ejido is the school. In the adult classes the teacher has usually to start from scratch. Of the 4,865 members who attended night classes in the year of Senior's survey, 2,053 could not even read and write; for many of

[110] According to Senior (*op. cit.*, p. 26), 7,000 hectares of wheat were sown in the 1936-37 season, 33,000 the next year, and 52,000 the next, but only 44,000 in 1939-40.

[111] Simpson, *op. cit.*, pp. 263 f.

[112] Senior, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

them education in the three R's was the first formal schooling they had ever received. In general, adult classes are devoted to subjects of direct concern to the member; they may help him to understand the rules of the Ejido and the principles of the 1917 Constitution, which initiated the agrarian reform. Besides these classes, the teacher, in collaboration with the Women's League, arranges sports activities for the younger folk. Baseball and soccer are the preferred sports.

A drastic reform in the use of leisure time can be seen in the complete elimination of saloons from the Ejidos and in banning the sale of intoxicating drinks of any kind. In the land of *pulque* – "second to none as a destroyer of health, an underminer of character, and a sapper of initiative and energy" [113] – this must mean a tremendous saving in productive energy. Likewise, with the improvement of living standards, gambling houses and other centers of vice have disappeared. A favorite recreation is going to a neighboring town, or to Torreon, center of the Laguna region, to see a moving picture or to attend a major-league baseball game.[114]

One of the severe obstacles to rural rehabilitation in Mexico is the prevalence of disease. Contrary to the opinion of some, formed on the basis of impressions rather than facts, the Mexican people "are a sick people; their span of life is short, and their footsteps are dogged by disease from the cradle to the grave; they die young, and, if one may say so, often." [115] Two sets of figures should suffice to demonstrate the truth of this statement. During the period 1926 to 1930, the average mortality rate for Mexico was 25.5 per 1,000; this means a rate 116.3 per cent above that of the United States. In 1930 the rate of infant mortality in Mexico was 131.6 per 1,000, about 102 per cent above that of the United States.[116]

The following are the chief causes of death, in order of their frequency: diarrhea and enteritis, chronic bronchitis, bronchopneumonia and pneumonia, malaria, typhoid and paratyphoid fevers, and smallpox.[117]

Having earnestly begun the task of rehabilitation, the Mexican Government had to deal with the urgent problem of medical care. Health services were organized in the Laguna region in November, 1936, at which time the land was turned over to the Ejidos. Since

[113] Simpson, *op. cit.*, p. 267.
[114] Senior, *op. cit.*, p. 36.
[115] Simpson, *op. cit.*, p. 272.
[116] *Ibid.*, p. 273.
[117] *Ibid.*, pp. 274 ff.

then the medical authorities have covered the region with a network of 14 dispensaries, 10 first-aid stations, 5 dental clinics, and a 110-bed hospital in Torreon. The dispensary staff usually consists of a physician, an assistant physician, two visiting nurses, a pharmacist, a chauffeur, and a janitor, and each dispensary owns one or two ambulances. There are three field-hospital clinics with maternity wards and operating rooms. Finally, a Traveling Sanitary Brigade, including an epidemiologist, a physician, a dentist, a midwife, and several nurses, instructs Ejido members in basic sanitary requirements. The Brigade goes directly into the Ejidos where it conducts demonstration lessons on the value of prophylaxis against contagious diseases and on hygiene and related fields.

The services of the system are at the disposal of Ejido families for a fee of two pesos (less than forty cents) a month. And the Ejidos are learning to avail themselves of these opportunities. During 1938, as Senior relates, the hospital had 1,283 in-patients, held 24,000 consultations, issued 9,372 prescriptions, performed 501 major operations, made 2,310 laboratory analyses, and took 1,037 X rays.[118]

Heretofore, no provisions have been made for invalidism and old-age insurance. But Senior states that "a social insurance scheme for the region is being studied." [119]

The Ejido, still at the stage of a cooperative producers' association, has effected no profound changes in the traditional family pattern. It has, however, brought about significant progress in the status of the peon woman. Although she cannot become a member of the Ejido, she has learned to participate more extensively in the life of the community. She has found organizational expression in the Women's League (*Ligas Femeniles*), whose long-range aim is "to help our fathers, husbands, or brothers to care for the land which has been given them. Then look after our children's education, find a better place for ourselves as mothers, wives, and as women worthy of all respect. Then, to strive for a better home for our families, for a better community, and a better country. Finally, to fight for the freedom of all women, so that they may enjoy the rights which justly belong to them." [120]

By 1940 there were 159 Women's Leagues in existence in the Laguna region, with a total membership of 4,000. Each League is run by an elected executive committee whose officers, called "secre-

[118] Senior, *op. cit.*, pp. 33 f. [119] *Ibid.*, p. 25. [120] *Ibid.*, p. 35.

taries," are in charge of hygiene, education, organization, and propaganda. Most of the Leagues own sewing machines and corn-grinding mills; some supervise and run the local grocery stores. As mentioned above, the Leagues exert a healthy influence in recreational activities. Thus, by helping to raise the standards of her community, the Ejido woman appears to be on the way to a more important status – possibly to full emancipation in the not too distant future.

The processes of drastic reform, such as those initiated in the Laguna region, cannot succeed unless accompanied by effective methods of education for all age groups. For adults grown up under different conditions, the problem is mainly one of making clear to them the meaning of reforms and of gaining their good-will and support. The children, on the other hand, must be prepared for the task of continuing where their fathers will have to leave off, and encouraged to improve, if possible, on the past.

Because of these essential aims, the role of school and teacher is much more vital in the Ejido than it is in more static societies. The teacher cannot limit her activity to the imparting of slightly detached "general" knowledge. Here, besides teaching the three R's, she has to be able to interpret all the phases of the new program to the parents as well as to the children.

The establishment of a school in an Ejido is characteristic of its relation to the community. The teacher, arriving in a new place, is confronted with the problem not only of getting the schoolhouse built, but even of finding the money to do it with. In planning the building and its grounds she has to keep in mind the many functions which it is going to serve. She has to have classrooms, to be sure; but besides, there will be needed flush toilets and showers to teach the villagers the basic requirements of hygiene; there will have to be a vegetable garden in which vitamins unknown to the peons will be cultivated; and a plot to be worked by the members for the benefit of the teacher. There will have to be space reserved for a school library, which will serve at the same time as a community library. An adult education program will need to be planned; sports organized; and a Women's League established as an auxiliary to all these undertakings. In short, the teacher's problem is to build a "center of study and resolution of all collective problems in their economic, artistic, social, recreational, and cultural aspects." [121]

121 *Ibid.*, p. 30.

How hard a task this is can be inferred from Senior's figures on school attendance in the Laguna region. Of a total rural school population of 28,621, only 22,601 were registered, and not more than an average of 15,335 attended school at the time of this record.[122]

In 1940 the number of teachers in the Laguna was 443. All of them belonged to the Confederation of Educational Workers, probably the most important trade-union in Mexico. They were supervised by ten inspectors, travelling on motorcycles from one end of the region to the other. These inspectors served in a double capacity. They were also the mail carriers for villages which never before had had any connection with the outside world.

Not all the schools attain the model equipment described above. Many of them have no libraries, some lack playgrounds and other facilities. Still, there are those that have open-air theatres and other highly developed functions. In over a hundred of the Laguna schools the students have organized cooperatives, which sell shares at ten centavos each to the members and supply them with pencils, notebooks, and candy at more reasonable prices than the stores.

At the Santa Teresa Agricultural School, adult education plays an interesting part. The school has been founded to train promising members of the Ejidos in community leadership. The curriculum includes farm mechanics, irrigation, bookkeeping, cooperative administration, economics, collective farming, and other related subjects. The school is organized like an Ejido, with all the features of an agricultural experiment station, and the teaching is done through practice. After a course of a year and a half, the students, whose average age is thirty, are able to assume a leading part in the management of their home Ejido.

The National Bank

More difficult than the problem of internal management is that of the National Bank of Ejido Credit. Since these settlements have been formed by the poorest of the peasants, financing them is a full-sized job. The state in which the peons were admitted to membership is described by the Director of the Union of Laguna as follows: "We must record . . . that when we started our activities as *ejidatarios* in 1936, we had not a single piece of goods which might serve as a real guarantee for credit institutions. Our land could

122 *Ibid.*

not be alienated and therefore would not serve, and we lacked work animals, machinery, crops to sell or any other material goods."[123] Accordingly, every penny that went into their settlement as an Ejido had to be borrowed. They had to have maintenance money until the first crops came in; money to buy livestock, machinery, and other farm implements; and money for land improvement, particularly for proper irrigation – an important condition of successful farming in all of Mexico.

Irrigation is effected in the Laguna partly by the floods of the rivers Nazas and Aguanaval, and partly by pump wells. Flood water, however, is available for only 88 per cent of the land occupied by the Ejidos. To improve matters, the Government has begun the construction of El Palmita dam on the Nazas river, with a prospective storage capacity of three billion cubic meters. But until its completion the settlements must depend in part on the wells; 35 wells will have been drilled and equipped since the distribution of lands, bringing the total number in the Laguna to 517 in 1939. According to estimates, 400 more will have to be sunk to cover the needs. The Ejido Bank has to finance all expenses, including such major improvements. The Bank apparently has performed the task in a way as novel as it is efficacious.

Arturo Gaona, an official of the Torreon branch, describes the process of financing an Ejido as follows.[124] Representatives of the given Ejido meet with the Bank's agronomist. Together they work out a careful plan of activities for months and even years ahead. This usually includes estimates of the acreage to be put under cultivation, of the members needed in each particular phase of operation, of the cost of equipment, and of the probable commercial value of the yield. Next, the Ejido formally applies to the Bank for a loan in the amount of these estimated requirements. Two kinds of loans are granted: a short-term credit for current operating costs, and a long-term credit, usually five years, for machinery and other durable equipment.

The Ejido receives the short-term loan in weekly payments, enough to cover wages and other running expenses. The interest charged is 8 per cent per annum. At the end of the season the Ejidos sell their crop through the Bank, and, if possible, pay off the short-

[123] *Ibid.*, p. 48.

[124] See Arturo Gaona, "So Much Land, So Many People," *Land Policy Review* (February, 1941).

term debt and 20 per cent of the long-term loan. The balance of income, if any, is declared as a dividend and paid to the members at a ratio calculated on the basis of their work-days. The Ejido is then free to apply for next year's credit.

Senior illustrates the manner in which the Ejido Barcelona in Durango settled accounts with the Bank.[125] This colony received 200 pesos per ton for its wheat crop – a total of 96,770 pesos. The sum was accounted for as follows:

	(Pesos)
Repayment of 1/5 of loan for machinery, implements, and semi-permanent improvements	6,116.31
Interest	600.77
Three per cent for purchase of Class C stock in *Banco Ejidal*	170.32
Repayment of Bank's loans for daily advances to members, for work animals, oil and gasoline for machinery	26,644.53
Interest	732.58
One per cent for purchase of Class C stock	269.14
Taxes (three per cent of value of crop)	2,903.10
Social fund for local community betterment (five per cent of crop value)	4,838.50
Medical service contribution	593.00
Irrigation fee (5 pesos per hectare)	225.00
	43,093.25
Distributed as dividends to 77 members	53,676.75
Realized on sale of wheat	96,770.00

Figures of the total amounts advanced by the Ejido Bank to the Ejidos in the Laguna region are available only with regard to crop loans for the first three years of operation. According to Senior, the Bank advanced to the Ejidos in the first year 34,143,009.67 pesos; in the following year the credit was somewhat smaller, amounting to 28,839,676.39 pesos; and in the third year it was further reduced to 24,730,987.86 pesos.

According to Bank statements, 40 per cent of the Ejidos repaid their loans in the first year: the following year the net profit made by all Ejidos amounted to 1,981,051.53, and the repayments increased; in the third year the net profits rose to 7,850,459.78 pesos

125 Senior, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

and 60 per cent of the Ejidos were able to repay the advanced credits.[126]

To complete the picture of the Bank's financial aid to the Ejidos, the help offered in purchasing essential commodities may be worth mentioning. The Torreon branch of the Ejido Bank has, as Gaona relates, established "concentration store-houses" throughout the region, which sell the main supplies needed by the Ejidos at wholesale prices. In 1939 these store-houses sold to the Ejidos 10,126 tons of corn, 2,334 tons of hay, 2,822 tons of alfalfa, 22,247 tons of barley, 5,711,000 litres of tractoline, 1,552,000 litres of gasoline, 3,049,000 litres of diesel oil, and 619,000 litres of oil.

The two main crops of the Laguna region are wheat and cotton: 96 per cent of the cultivated land, about 100,000 hectares, is given over to them. The tendency, however, is to increase the proportion of wheat. In 1937-38, of the total cultivated area, 65,000 hectares were farmed for cotton and 33,000 for wheat; in 1938-39, cotton decreased to 57,000 hectares, and wheat increased to 52,000 hectares. In 1939-40, both crops decreased – cotton to 50,000 hectares and wheat to 44,000.[127]

Since the Ejido is run along lines of large-scale farming, mechanization is one of its attributes. The degree of mechanization achieved can be deduced from Gaona's list of farm equipment owned in 1940 by the 300 Ejidos in the Laguna region: 417 tractors, 126 combine threshers, 33 threshers, 1,352 German plows, 862 disk plows, 339 tractor harrows, 69 tractor planters, 115 packing machines, 780 rollers, 12,586 cultivating machines, 2,148 scrapers, 136 trucks, 373 platforms or freight wagons. In addition, the Ejidos owned 1,018 mule harrows, 42,268 mule-traction planters, and 21,731 mules.

The cause of economic difficulties is not a lack of modern equipment; it is chiefly insufficient land. According to Gaona, the minimum estimated area needed for the support of one family is 4 hectares – 2.4 to be planted for cotton and 1.6 for wheat. Yet, in 1941, 76 per cent of the settlements, containing 88 per cent of the total Ejido population in the region, had less than that at their disposal. This handicap is partly attributed to the fact that at the time of land distribution, 16,000 migratory workers had to be included in the Ejidos. Other handicaps impeding progress are purely physical, such as poverty of the soil, or poor irrigation. There is

[126] *Ibid.*, p. 23.

[127] *Ibid.*, pp. 9 f.

hope that these may, in most instances, be overcome in the near future.

There is, however, one shortcoming that does not promise easy remedy, and that is the frequent inability of the members to work together under the new system. Wherever they consistently refuse to act as a group, the situation becomes hopeless. Ejidos of this sort are a burden on the whole project, and the Bank, as Senior indicates, will have to withdraw credit in such cases and hand the failures over to social welfare agencies.[128]

Implications of the Ejido

In conclusion, it should be noted that many of the virtues as well as the shortcomings of the Ejido are similar to those of the F.S.A. cooperative farms. They resemble each other, in fact, in many ways. Like the F.S.A. farm, the Mexican experiment originated in a sense of responsibility on the part of the Government toward the destitute farmer, and in the hope of modernizing the country's agriculture. They show also a strong similarity of administrative set-up; they are theoretically self-governing, but the Government as creditor finds it necessary to exercise strict control and to supplement with an intensive educational program. Likewise, both types of cooperative deserve credit for fulfilling the rehabilitation task satisfactorily. We have reason to conclude that the Ejido is taking care of the "ten criteria of rehabilitation."

Whether the price of this achievement is commensurate with its value will depend, as it did in that of the American equivalent, on the point of view. If the criterion of financial profit is allowed to prevail, the case for the Ejido will certainly appear doubtful. If, however, social and moral values are conceded, disinterested judges will render a more favorable verdict. The difficulty in pronouncing judgment will remain in the fact that social and moral values can never be final and will never definitely settle the argument.

In one respect – that of its future security – the Ejido appears to differ substantially from the F.S.A. cooperatives. Although open to the same dangers of political interference which proved fatal to the American experiment, the Mexican situation contains two hopeful factors. First, community living is not alien to the tradition of the country; it represents rather a return to an original mode of communal organization. Even though he might be deprived of his

[128] *Ibid.*, p. 23.

common land, the Mexican peon always lived in villages and not on isolated farms. And then the historic origin of the Ejido differs from that of the F.S.A. farm. The Mexican cooperative came as a result of "real revolution," which, as Simpson finds, was essentially agrarian.[129] While the F.S.A. farms formed a small part of the rehabilitation program of the New Deal, whose political exponent was still in power when they were abolished, the Ejido has been growing since the first day of its inauguration, independent of frequent changes of government. It received a tremendous impetus under Lazaro Cardeñas, but according to recent newspaper reports, it is still being extended to new regions under his successor, Avila Camacho. The future of the Ejido seems therefore secure, as long as no counter-revolution destroys the democratic regime and, with it, all vestiges of agrarian reform.

Before concluding the subject of the Ejido, we should like to underline one significant aspect of its historical development, which involves a principle basic to the planning of the cooperative community. We have found it effective in the case of New Llano and we find it demonstrated again in the history of the Ejido. It is the principle pointed out by Gide – that community of property is more productive of conflict than private property.

Originally, the organization of the Ejidos was ruled by collectivistic ideas, codified in "Circular 51," according to which "Ejido lands were to be held and worked in common – all for one and one for all, and no questions raised concerning mine and thine." This system, called by Simpson "simple collectivism," was dislocated by the "Law of Ejido Patrimony" in 1925, which insisted on a basis of "(fairly) rugged individualism." [130] Even those communities who were satisfied to run their farmland as "one big farm," were forced to divide it among the members.[131] "Peace and progress" vanished from the Ejidos, and they reached an impasse. The only way out, as suggested by the *agraristas* and by Simpson's book of that time, was to return to their original collectivism.

As we have seen, the Agrarian Code of 1934, one of the first legislative acts of the Cardeñas regime, has carried out the program of the *agraristas* and, in spite of its weaknesses, the Ejido has since maintained its steady and consistent growth. There is still conflict; the principle of "mine and thine" is not yet entirely eliminated.

129 Simpson, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

130 *Ibid.*

131 *Ibid.*, pp. 464 ff.

But today, all land is owned and is being worked in common. At least there is no conflict about the basic concern of a cooperative community: the distribution of land. That source of conflict has been eliminated.

CHAPTER VIII

THE KOLKHOZ, A "SIMPLE AFFAIR"

Critics of the collectivization of agriculture in Soviet Russia like to stress the difficulty of obtaining a reliable picture of its development. For this they blame the instability of the Government's policy and a certain discrepancy between theory and practice. Whatever the justice of their reproof, it is certain there does not exist in English any authentic monograph on the Kolkhoz. Every book about Soviet Russia written in the past ten or fifteen years contains a few pages on the collective farms, but a systematic survey of these farms has yet to be made.

No survey of this kind can be offered in the present chapter. It would have to be based on a scientific field investigation and lies therefore beyond the possibilities of this war period. We can only attempt to present a somewhat composite picture of the salient features of the Soviet collective farm, in which more emphasis will be placed on plan and intention than on an appraisal of practice. This, however, should contribute something of value to a workable pattern for the resettlement cooperative community.

Aims of the Kolkhoz

The name Kolkhoz (plural Kolkhozy) as applied to the collective farms of Soviet Russia is misleading. Kolkhoz is a word formed by contraction of the first syllables of the two Russian words "kollektivnoye khozyaistvo," meaning "collective economy" or "collective farm." But there were actually three different types of collective farms in Soviet Russia: the commune, the artel, and the toz.[132] All three represent different degrees of cooperation. The most extreme type is the commune, in which consumption as well as

[132] See Malevsky – Malevitch, "Kolkhoz, Collective Farms," in *Russia, U.S.S.R.A., Complete Handbook* (New York, 1932), pp. 712 ff. See also Sidney and Beatrice Webb, *Soviet Communism, A New Civilization* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936), Vol. I, pp. 241 f.

production are handled collectively; the lowest on the cooperative scale is the toz, which is merely a temporary association of farmers for the carrying out of certain limited tasks together. What is usually referred to as Kolkhoz is actually the second type of collective farm, the artel. Artel is the name used in Russian literature and in governmental publications on the subject. Since, however, Kolkhoz has become with us identical with artel and is almost exclusively used, we shall follow that accepted usage. Moreover, the toz having completely disappeared and the commune existing only in negligible numbers as compared with the artel, the latter has become the dominating type of the Soviet agricultural community and the equivalent of the generic term Kolkhoz.

Artel is defined in Webster's dictionary as "an independent union of laborers working collectively and sharing the profits," and that is what the Kolkhoz essentially is. Only the means of production are collectivized in this Soviet community; all other aspects of life are influenced but not controlled by cooperative principles.

The initial impulse in the formation of the Kolkhoz is attributed by M. M. Wolf to Markevitch, later the Assistant Commissar of Agriculture, but at that time manager of the Ukrainian state farm "Shevchenko." According to Wolf, Markevitch offered to lend to a nearby village tractors and other machinery, together with technical personnel – on condition that "all landmarks were to be removed and all the land thrown into one large piece; collectivized, as it was called." In return for the loan the peasants were to give to the state farm 25 per cent of the winter corn and 33 1/3 per cent of the spring corn.[133] This version, however, is not entirely accurate. Wolf describes the practice followed by the Machine and Tractor Stations (initialed in Russian MTC). Although the M.T.S. (English initials) is an essential feature of agricultural collectivization, it is not identical with the Kolkhoz. The first rural cooperative communities had already originated, as Lazar Volin records, during the period of "war communism" (1918-1921).[134]

According to Volin, there were in existence on July 1, 1927, fewer

[133] M. M. Wolf, *Paths in the Development of Agriculture in the U.S.S.R.* (State Planning Committee of the U.S.S.R., 1930). Quoted by Sir John Russell, "The Farming Problem in Russia," *The Slavonic and East European Review*, Vol. XVI, No. 47 (January, 1938).

[134] Lazar Volin, "Agrarian Collectivism in the Soviet Union," *Journal of Political Economy* (October and December, 1937).

than 15,000 Kolkhozy, comprising less than 19 per cent of the peasant population, and with a sown area of 2,000,000 acres out of a total of 280,000,000 cultivable acres. It was the Fifteenth Party Congress that threw the full weight of the Government behind the Kolkhoz, and the first Five-Year Plan (1928-1933) which marked the beginning in earnest of collectivized agriculture.

The reasons for selecting the artel type for the collective farm are explicit in the "Model Statutes for Agricultural Artels," Article 1, under "Aims and Objectives":

> The agricultural workers, poor peasants and middle peasants of the village of . . . district . . . okrug . . . voluntarily unite in an agricultural artel in order to build up with common means of production and common organized labor, a large collective farm, and thereby to secure a real and complete victory over the kulaks, over all exploiters and enemies of the toilers, a real and complete victory over poverty and ignorance, and over the backwardness of small individual farms, and to guarantee a high productivity of labor and a large marketable output of the collective farms.[135]

These objectives are of a twofold nature, partly economic and partly political. The first motivation aims chiefly at higher "marketable output"; the second at the elimination of the rural capitalist, the kulak. Higher marketable output, according to the Marxian theory, could result only from the application of large-scale industrial methods to farming. Since the country was not far enough advanced to produce the necessary machinery in sufficient quantities to supply all the 25,000,000 small farms then existing, a reorganization of rural economy was urgently indicated. Likewise, while the industrial proletariat had taken over the political power and was ruling the country as a whole, the peasantry, after the expropriation of the large estates and the nationalization of the land, was still dominated by the wealthy village farmer, the kulak. In both respects the collective large-scale farm promised remedy. As Stalin emphasized, "The great importance of the Kolkhozy . . . consists precisely in this, that they provide the foundation for the employment of machinery and tractors in agriculture, that they form the basis for the transformation of the peasant and his psychology in the spirit of proletarian socialism."[136]

135 J. Stalin, *Building Collective Farms* (New York, 1931); see Appendix, "Model Statutes for Agricultural Artels."

136 *Proceedings of the Conference of Marxian Agricultural Economists* (Moscow, 1930), as quoted by Volin, *op. cit.*, p. 610.

Of the three collective types of Kolkhoz the artel was given further preference for reasons of expediency. At the time, Stalin himself considered, and still does, the commune to be the "higher form," but he found that conditions were not "yet ripe for the agricultural communes as the *predominant* form." Large and stable communes can exist and develop only, he pointed out, "if they possess experienced cadres and tried leaders . . . Such cadres and leaders, however, can only be expected to develop as the agricultural artels become stronger and consolidated." Then "will the soil be prepared for a mass movement of the peasant toward the commune." [137]

Until that time the artel, "a simple affair and more easily understood by the broad mass of peasants," [138] has been accepted as the most expedient form for the collectivization of agriculture. As soon as the Government encouraged the Kolkhoz by such means at its disposal as credits, taxation privileges, and land allotment, it began to grow rapidly at a ratio exceeding even that specified by the Plan. In 1928 it increased to 33,000, and in the following year to 57,000.[139] From then on, stimulated by the development of industry, collectivization of agriculture proceeded rapidly until, at the outbreak of the war, the Kolkhozy numbered about 250,000, with an average of 75 families per community. Scarcely more than one per cent of Soviet agriculture remained individualistic.

Formation of the Kolkhoz

A Kolkhoz is formed when several peasants in the same neighborhood decide to socialize their "basic means of production," including labor, soil, draught beasts, farm structures, and implements, while keeping their individual homes, a small garden, a few livestock, poultry, and the like, for themselves. By pooling their land they become members of the Kolkhoz and are transformed from "small" peasants, or mujiks, into agricultural cooperative producers.

Membership is open to all toilers who have reached the age of sixteen and are willing to comply with the established rules and regulations. The question of admission of applicants is taken up first by the Management Committee of the Kolkhoz but is subject to approval by the General Meeting of members. When joining,

137 Stalin, *op. cit.*, p. 106. 138 *Ibid.* 139 Volin, *loc. cit.*

the member must pay an admission fee which varies according to his previous status. In the case of a peasant, this amounts to between two and ten per cent of his property, both socialized and individual, with the exception of household articles and personal belongings. In the case of wage earners, such as agronomists, teachers, surveyors, or employees of any organization or institution in the area of the Kolkhoz, the fee is determined by the Management Committee but is not allowed to exceed ten per cent of the annual income. Finally, an agricultural worker who joins a Kolkhoz pays a fixed admission fee of not more than five rubles.

Besides paying ten per cent of the value of their property, workers regularly employed outside the Kolkhoz pay a single contribution amounting to three per cent of their annual wages. The admission fee is the only deduction made from the wages of members, and instalment payments are permitted. Admission fees are deposited in the "indivisible fund" of the Kolkhoz.

Excluded from membership are the kulaks and all persons deprived of their civil rights, though exceptions are allowed in the case of families where a soldier, sailor, or village teacher, among the members, is ready to recommend the applicant. Conditions prior to collectivization are indicated by a provision that peasants "who, before joining the collective farm, slaughter or sell their cattle, get rid of their stock or wantonly sell their seed corn," [140] will definitely not be accepted by the Kolkhoz.

The racial composition of the membership is as varied as the rural population of Soviet Russia. Any one community will, however, show a homogeneous population, inasmuch as the members are recruited from the natives of its locality. Instances of a racial mixture may occur, nevertheless, because in practice as well as in theory no restriction as to race, nationality, or religion is permitted.

It may be of interest to note here that there exist a number of Kolkhozy settled by Jews in the Ukraine, the Crimea, White Russia, Georgia, Daghestan, Uzbekistan, and Biro-Bidjan. In the latter area, set aside for a Jewish autonomous state, with an estimated population of 18,000, there were in 1939, 18 Jewish Kolkhozy out of 44 in the entire region.[141]

In 1931 the Agrarian Institute of the Communist Academy, in

[140] Stalin, *op. cit.*

[141] Raphael Mahler, "Jewish Agricultural Colonization in the Soviet Union," *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*, pp. 291 f.

cooperation with the "Scientific Kolkhoz Institute," conducted an inquiry on the former status of members, and obtained the following data: the number of former "middle" peasants in the Kolkhozy varied from 48.7 per cent to 59.4 per cent; the number of agricultural laborers, i.e., members without land, varied from 7.5 per cent to 19.8 per cent. The average representation of the different classes is indicated as follows: 55 per cent "middle" peasants, 31 per cent "small" peasants, and 14 per cent agricultural labor.

The small number of those who should have been most strongly attracted by the Kolkhoz, the propertyless laborers, may be due to the fact that, being the most mobile of the rural population, they were quick to abandon agriculture in favor of industry. This trend was welcomed and encouraged by the Government, who had expected that the increased use of machinery would reduce the number of hands needed in agriculture and would release them for the fast growing industry. Politically, only about one per cent of the members belong to the Communist Party.

No figures on turnover in the Kolkhoz are available. It appears that voluntary resignations are less frequent than expulsions, which, at times, particularly during what Volin calls the "Great Purge of 1937-38," have assumed "epidemic proportions."[142] The steady increase in the number of Kolkhozy can be taken, on the other hand, as an indication that, on the whole, resignations as well as expulsions have little influence on the trend toward collectivization.

According to the "Model Statutes," a member leaving the Kolkhoz receives his share of contributions, but no land once belonging to the Kolkhoz can be withdrawn. Land allotment to the departing member has to be made, therefore, from outside territory.

The Kolkhoz in a Planned Economy

The unique aspect of the Kolkhoz lies in the fact that it is the only known cooperative community which is an integral part of a planned economy.

The highest agency in charge of the administration of the Kolkhoz is the Commissariat for Agriculture, corresponding to our Department of Agriculture. The highest authority for the actual

[142] Volin, "The Russian Peasant Household Under the Mir and the Collective Farm System," *Foreign Agriculture* (March, 1940). See also Volin, "Effects of the Drought and Purge on the Agriculture of the Soviet Union," *Foreign Agriculture* (May, 1939).

operations of the Kolkhoz, however, is the State Planning Commission (*Gosplan*),[143] which issues the "Plan," the most comprehensive instrument of Soviet economy. The Commissariat of Agriculture and all local officials directing the activities of the Kolkhoz are, in fact, only executive supervisors for those parts of the Five-Year Plan (*Pyatiletka*) which refer to agriculture.

The State maintains effective control of the Kolkhoz, chiefly through the Machine and Tractor Station. When mechanization of agriculture became part of the Plan, the problem arose of supplying the Kolkhozy with machinery for large-scale farming. Farm machinery was scarce and costly; economy and efficiency demanded that it be utilized to its fullest capacity. Concentration of machinery at points from which it could be made available to more than one Kolkhoz offered a solution to the problem. Thus, the Machine and Tractor Stations came into being. Their number rose quickly from 158 in 1930 to nearly 7,000 just prior to the war.

With an increase in numbers came an extension of functions. Today the M.T.S. is much more than a mere machine-lending center. Its staff is composed not only of technicians who run the tractors and train the members of the Kolkhoz in handling modern farm machinery; it also includes agronomists who advise the community in such matters as rotation of crops, the proper use of fertilizers, conservation of soil, and other related problems. Its expert farm accountants help to establish and maintain sound methods of accounting.[144] In its advisory capacity, the M.T.S. fulfills functions similar in some respects to those of the F.S.A. and the Ejido Bank.

The M.T.S., which is, of course, State-owned and State-financed, also plays an important part in the collection of that portion of the farm produce which constitutes the State's compensation for services rendered. This institution has, in fact, become "the heart and center of the local agricultural administration."[145]

In internal affairs the Kolkhoz is self-governing. The highest authority is the General Meeting of members, which, as stipulated by the revised model charter, needs a quorum of two-thirds to act in important matters, such as admission and expulsion of members,

[143] The Plan becomes law by decree of the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R. See Sidney and Beatrice Webb, *op. cit.*, p. 627.

[144] Albert Rhys Williams, *The Russians* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1943), p. 113.

[145] Volin, *op. cit.*

election of officers, and appropriation of funds. The General Meeting elects the various committees and the Executive Board, whose term under the revised charter has been extended from one to two years, but whose powers have been limited in favor of the General Meeting.[146]

Most important to the conduct of affairs are the Management Committee and the Audit Committee, both elected for a period of one year. The former is in charge of the various phases of farm business. The latter, similar to the Vigilance Committee of the Ejido, supervises the activities of the former. It is charged with insuring the "observance of the provisions of the statutes, the fulfillment of the production plan, and the carrying out of contracts with obligations toward the State." It also "audits the funds, property, books and accounts" and "appends its report to the annual report." [147]

To insure the obedience of members to the accepted rules and regulations of the Kolkhoz, the Management Committee can avail itself of disciplinary measures. Failure to carry out assignments or to fulfill social obligations, absence from work without adequate excuse, negligence in handling equipment and livestock, is likely to draw punishment ranging from reprimand or warning to temporary suspension and fine, or even to expulsion. The abuse connected with this extreme penalty has made certain restrictions necessary. The revised model charter insists that expulsion be imposed only after all other corrective measures have failed. The General Meeting alone, at which two-thirds of the members must be present, has the right to decree expulsion, and even then, the expelled member may appeal to the Raion (District) Executive Committee. While the appeal is pending, all rights and privileges of the member remain intact. Officers of the Kolkhoz and the party officials concerned, who violate these provisions are themselves liable to criminal prosecution.[148]

The Kolkhoz as a Compromise

As we have seen, the Kolkhoz is actually a compromise type of cooperative community. It tries to take a middle course between

146 Volin, "Agrarian Collectivism in the Soviet Union," *Journal of Political Economy* (October and December, 1937).

147 See Stalin, *op. cit.*

148 Volin, "Effects of the Drought and Purge on the Agriculture of the Soviet Union," *Foreign Agriculture* (May, 1939), p. 195.

the "higher form" of the commune and the small individual farm, and thus to establish a degree of cooperation acceptable to the average Russian peasant. This compromise character extends even to that phase of Kolkhoz economy which is the most highly socialized. We have defined the Kolkhoz as a producers' cooperative, but not all its production is cooperative. Each member, in addition to participating in the cultivation of the communal lands, is free to work a small farmstead of his own, usually one of an acre or two, and he is allowed to sell privately as much of its products as he can spare. He is thus partly a cooperative, partly an individual producer.[149]

All work in the Kolkhoz has to be done by the members. Hiring outside labor is permitted only in times of emergency and is subject to approval by the General Meeting. Work on this communal land – the average acreage of the Kolkhoz is now about 1,300 acres [150] – is done in groups called Brigades. A Brigade may consist of from five to fifty members assigned to a definite plot of land and to a specific role in production. They are directed by a foreman. Assignment of Brigades to their tasks is made by the Management Committee, which, in turn, must comply with the Gosplan as interpreted by the local agent. No one may refuse to carry out his assignment. Article 6 of the revised model charter is explicit on this point: "The artel is obliged to carry on collective farming according to the Plan, observing precisely the plans of agricultural production and of the obligations to the State laid down by the organs of the peasant-workers' Government." [151]

The typical work-day begins at 7 A.M. and lasts until 7 P.M., with a two-hour recess at noon. Under normal conditions, members average 50 work-hours in a five-day week. (Shortly before the outbreak of the war, the week was extended to six work-days.) Time devoted to collective and individual farming and to leisure and sleep, during a 24-hour period, is shown in Table 9, which distinguishes between summer and winter seasons.

It is the woman who gives the larger part of her time to working on the individual farmstead. But this state of affairs has not always

149 Volin, "The Russian Peasant Household Under the Mir and the Collective Farm System," *Foreign Agriculture* (March, 1940), p. 144.

150 Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

151 Volin, "Agrarian Collectivism in the Soviet Union," *Journal of Political Economy* (October and December, 1937).

TABLE 9*

HOURS DEVOTED TO WORK, SLEEP, AND LEISURE BY KOLKHOZ MEMBERS

Activity	Men		Women	
	Summer	Winter	Summer	Winter
Labor On Collective Farm	6.23	5.35	4.43	2.37
Labor On Private Farm	2.28	2.57	6.50	7.28
Leisure	5.27	6.29	5.01	5.16
Sleep	7.42	8.59	7.26	8.39

* See Sir E. John Russell, "The Farming Problem in Russia," *The Slavonic and East European Review*, Vol. XVI, No. 47 (January, 1938).

prevailed. Complaints – such as the one cited by Volin, that in Siberia "the collective farmers are simply too busy to work in the collectives" – indicate that the balance between the two kinds of work has not always been maintained. To enforce a fair standard, the Government has had to stipulate a minimum of work-days, which each member, under threat of punishment, has to devote to collective farming. Since the outbreak of the war the required number of days has been raised and is now 150 per year.

Remuneration for work is arranged in a way that reminds us of the unequal advance paid in the F.S.A. farms. But in the Kolkhoz the problem is more complicated. A member may receive an advance for food and other needs (in kind, or in money) to the amount of 50 per cent of his estimated year's income. At the end of the year, the harvest is thus divided: one portion goes to the state taxes, paid in products such as grain, flax, meat, etc.; another goes to services rendered by the M.T.S.; the Kolkhoz retains the balance, about two-thirds of the total harvest. Further deductions are made for the Kolkhoz' own benefit: fodder and seed are set aside for the next year; payments are made to the emergency fund; sums are allotted for construction and repair, and so on. Only after all these deductions does the member receive his share, according to the number of his labor-days during the year.

The meaning of the term "labor-day" (*trudoden*), as used in Soviet economy, is ambiguous, probably because it is not employed in its chronological sense, but as a measure of both quantitative and

qualitative work accomplishment. A further complication presents itself in that even as a measure of accomplishment the labor-day is not an absolute unit but is fixed rather in its relation to the total income of the Kolkhoz. It may thus vary from year to year. Unskilled work, for example, rates lower than skilled work; accordingly, an unskilled worker has to work more hours than a skilled worker to achieve the same income. Both, however, will have earned more or less, depending on whether the total income of the Kolkhoz is higher or lower in a given year. Those who run the machines are, in general, the highest paid, and those who perform simple tasks, the lowest. This is in line with the compromise character of the Kolkhoz and indicates that the incentive of differential pay has been maintained in the interest of increased output.

Excerpts from statements made by a member of the Kolkhoz of Pokrovskoye, located in the Istra District, Moscow Region, may illustrate these problems. This community, established in 1931, raises cereals and garden crops, has a dairy farm, and breeds sheep and poultry. It owns three motor trucks, many agricultural machines, and numerous implements. In 1940, the average harvest per acre amounted to 21.32 cwt. of grain, 280 cwt. of vegetables, and 160 cwt. of potatoes. Summer wheat yielded 27.2 cwt. per acre, and some Brigades gathered as much as 35 to 37 cwt. per acre. Peter Zibelin, a sixty-year-old member, describes his income in this way: "In our farm, just as in every other collective farm in the Soviet Union, there are fixed output standards which have been set by a general meeting of the members of the artel. At this general meeting the output norms are given fixed evaluations in work-days, depending on the difficulty and importance of the work involved. Every type of labor is strictly accounted for. Last year the Government issued a decree by which those who overfulfill their norms in summer work, are credited with double the number of work-days. This greatly increased our earnings." [152]

Then, after explaining how the harvest is shared, he proceeds: "In our Pokrovskoye collective farm each work-day in 1940 brought in 2.7 kilograms of rye, 2.8 of winter and summer wheat, 0.6 of oats, 0.2 of peas, 21.2 of potatoes, 1.9 of cabbage, 0.9 of cucumbers, 1 of beet roots, 0.4 of carrots, 4.3 of fodder (beets and straw), plus 2 rubles and 17 kopecks in cash." [153]

[152] Voks Press Department, "Life on a Collective Farm," as related by Peter Zibelin (From the files of the American-Russian Institute, New York City).

[153] *Ibid.*

Zibelin is the head of a family of seven, consisting of his wife, also sixty years old; two sons, Ivan, 37, and Yakov, 21; Ivan's wife, Tatyana, 34; and three grandchildren. He himself ran up a total of 344 work-days; Yakov, 199; the daughter-in-law, 149; a grand total of 692 work-days. They received, all told, 14.484 tons of potatoes, 2.9 tons of vegetables, 120 kilograms of peas, 3 tons of fodder, and 1,501 rubles and 64 kopecks in cash.

The son, Ivan, working in the cooperative store, received wages in the amount of 4,200 rubles; Yakov, in addition to his work-days, earned 1,200 rubles in cash. Thus, the total cash income of the family amounted to 6,901 rubles and 64 kopecks, to which should be added the money realized from the sale of surplus produce.

In addition to this income derived from the Kolkhoz, there was Zibelin's individual farmstead, managed by his wife, who, by the way, also takes care of the three grandchildren. The family keeps a cow and 25 to 30 chickens, and raises 2 or 3 pigs a year. Part of the meat supply and produce is paid to the state; the rest, including milk, eggs, and pork, is consumed by the family itself.

The following sums were paid out of the family's income to the state: 112 rubles and 88 kopecks for agricultural taxes, 24 rubles for cultural taxes, 223 rubles and 63 kopeks for insurance on house and cattle, 29 rubles for Kolkhoz improvements – a total of 389 rubles and 51 kopecks.

For the household the family spent:

	(Rubles)
Firewood	100.00
Use of Kolkhoz Horse For Personal Needs (Driving to Railroad)	70.00
Kerosene	117.00
Sugar (120 kg.)	564.00
Tea	192.00
Soap	124.80
Salt, Matches, etc.	50.00
Total	1,217.80 Rubles

No data are available for commodities such as shoes, clothes, and other manufactured products.

The story Zibelin tells is probably a Kolkhoz success story. Although he assures us that he is only a rank-and-file member and that his income is much the same as that of others, we question

whether his Kolkhoz is typical. His budget figures differ from Table 10 (quoted by Volin from a Government source), which gives

TABLE 10*

CASH PAYMENTS ON 221,029 COLLECTIVE FARMS

Amount Paid Per Labor-Day (In Kopecks)	Percentage Of All Collective Farms	
	1936	1937
20 And Under	31.4	30.6
21–40	22.0	20.9
41–60	12.1	11.3
61–80	6.3	6.1
81–100	3.9	4.3
101–150	4.3	5.0
151–200	1.9	2.4
201–300	2.1	2.4
Over 300	4.6	4.2

* See L. Volin, "Effects of the Drought and Purge on the Agriculture of the Soviet Union," *Foreign Agriculture* (May, 1938).

the cash payments on 221,029 collective farms for 1936 and 1937. It is true that the decree limiting the use of cash for administrative expenses, capital improvements, and similar matters, was not issued until 1938,[154] prior to which time the cash payments were generally lower. But the increase in succeeding years could not have been so great as to make the Zibelin family's income representative.

In 1937, 75.7 per cent and, in 1936, 73.2 per cent of all Kolkhozy paid (in addition to their share in products) less than one ruble (100 kopecks) in cash per labor-day. Less than 2.5 per cent of all Kolkhozy paid between two and three rubles, the amount earned by Zibelin in 1940.

Zibelin's figure on payments in kind (6.1 kg. of grain per labor-day) contrasts with the 1936 average of 1.6 kg., though the 1937 average rose to 4 kg.[155] Zibelin's account may or may not be representative, but even if his prosperity should be exceptional, it would still indicate the economic opportunities of the luckier Kolkhozy.

154 Volin, "Effects of the Drought and Purge on the Agriculture of the Soviet Union," *Foreign Agriculture* (May, 1939), p. 192.

155 Volin, "The Russian Peasant Household Under the Mir and the Collective Farm System," *Foreign Agriculture* (March, 1940), p. 143.

Progress of the Individual

Individual consumption obtains in the Kolkhoz. Housing, food, clothing, and other personal needs are treated as individually as in any old-time Russian village. The external appearance of the Kolkhoz varies as much as it did before collectivization. This may account for the discrepancy in the reports of different visitors in one and the same year. The variation from year to year, on the other hand, may be due to progress made in the standard of living. Thus, Russell, whose essay was published in 1938, described the cottages as "poor," equipped only rarely with electricity; there was no drainage system; and there were no water pipes, a common well serving the entire Kolkhoz. He found little furniture in the houses, except, usually, beds; he saw no ornaments or decorations, only pictures of a stereotyped kind on the walls: an icon "for the older people," and a portrait of Stalin "for the younger ones." He considered the clothing of the members poor and dreary; the old sarafan was gone; the women wore dark or black dresses, with little or no embroidery. He observed no signs of gaiety and missed the famous Russian songs.[156]

But Wendell L. Willkie, in the Kolkhoz he visited, noticed that "the cattle barns were of brick and large; the floors were concrete and the stancheons modern." In the farm manager's home, he found the small stone house "simple, and in atmosphere not very different from a prosperous farmhouse in the United States." The food served was "simple but good." Willkie later discovered that this farm "was somewhat above the average in physical equipment," but that "it was run much like 250,000 other collective farms in the Soviet Union." [157]

The Kolkhozy which Russell visited in 1937 were in the Ukraine; the one Willkie saw in 1943 was on the Volga. Doubtless, at the time of Willkie's visit, there must have been Kolkhozy as poor as those reported by Russell. But even Russell, comparing the situation with conditions observed on a previous journey, had to admit that "there was a considerable appearance of prosperity about the village, and no question at all but that the people were better off than they had been . . . in 1930." [158]

[156] Russell, *loc. cit.*

[157] Wendell L. Willkie, *One World* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1943), pp. 32 ff.

[158] Russell, *op. cit.*, p. 338.

It seems to be generally agreed by all observers that the most remarkable and positive changes which collectivism brings into the life of the Russian peasant, lie in the sphere of cultural and social life. "As centers of culture," A. R. Williams says, "the Kolkhozy are fast eliminating what G. B. Shaw calls 'the idiocy of village life.'" In this respect the system has proved to be most effective. Through the Kolkhoz the Russian peasant has been given access to the opportunities for aesthetic, intellectual, and spiritual satisfactions, formerly available only to the more or less well-to-do city dweller. These farms have their theaters, their libraries, their stadiums, and "circles" for science, music, and dancing. It may be worthwhile to listen to what old Peter Zibelin has to say on the subject:

> We have all become very fond of reading and subscribe to newspapers, buy books and borrow them from the library. You can find the works of Pushkin, Gogol, Sholokhov, and Tolstoy in our book-case at home. Not long ago the whole family arranged readings of Emile Zola's *Peasants.*
>
> There is a big club in Pokrovskoye. Our villagers take an active part in the amateur art circles and themselves put on plays. The club has a cinema installation, and films are shown ten times a month. We have seen all the best Soviet pictures: *Chapayev, Lenin in October, A Great Citizen, Tractor Drivers, Peter the First,* and many others. A chess tournament was held in the club last year in which twelve of our collective farmers took part.
>
> During the winter we study in various groups and courses. I have finished a course in the elements of agricultural science. Lectures on social-political, scientific, agricultural, and other subjects are held regularly in the village.
>
> We often have trips to Moscow, visit museums, and go to the theatre there. My wife and I together with my sons have seen the opera, *Eugen Onegin,* Gogol's play *The Inspector General,* and *Woe from Wit* by Griboyedov, in Moscow theatres. We have also visited the Tretyakov Art Gallery.[159]

Probably not all Kolkhozy are culturally as well off as this one, but many of them enjoy a similarly rich intellectual and social life, and all seem to have been benefited, in some degree at least, from these newly opened opportunities. The virtual elimination of illiteracy is proof of the universality of Soviet education: illiteracy

159 Voks Press Department, *loc. cit.*

declined from an average of 48.9 per cent in 1929 to 18.8 per cent in 1939.

Besides raising his cultural standards, the Kolkhoz has given the Russian peasant social security, which the Soviet State had formerly granted only to the industrial proletariat. Although socialized medicine, the care of invalids, and provisions for the aged existed in urban areas prior to the Kolkhoz, the peasants could now share in these advantages.

Since cooperation extends only to production, and even here not all the way, there has been no change of economic basis strong enough to modify the family pattern. What has happened is rather that the younger peasant woman, who was ready to take advantage of the equality offered to women by socialism, profits by the change and becomes a co-worker with the man. In case of emergency, as in the present war, she is thus ready and prepared to fill his place efficiently, while the older women, like Zibelin's wife, generally stick to their place in the home. Collectivization of agriculture has not introduced anything new; it has merely furnished the village with patterns already accepted in urban areas.

The same is true of education. Despite tremendous changes in political and cultural life, the Kolkhoz has no special program of education in cooperation. Educational standards of the city have merely been carried over into the rural cooperatives, and the consequent effects on the rural localities are noteworthy only by comparison with the low standards which had formerly prevailed.

Economic Relations to the Government

To understand the financial relations between the Soviet State and the Kolkhoz, we should reconsider the motives which led to Government sponsorship. As we have seen, the need of an increased marketable output, together with the realization that only large-scale mechanized techniques could produce it, prompted the State to collectivize agriculture. In financing such enterprises, the Government rejected the customary practices of capitalist countries and followed principles rooted in Marxian theory. Stalin pointed out that in a society where the profit motive had been eliminated, a new attitude toward land and rural economy was in order: "In our country there is no such thing as absolute ground rent, or the purchase and sale of land, for private property of land does not exist. Therefore conditions favor the development of large-scale

grain farms."[160] Rejecting the capitalistic business norm of a maximum or fair rate of profit, he further stated: "In our country, on the contrary, large-scale grain-producing enterprises are at the same time State enterprises and therefore do not require for their development the extraction of a maximum profit, nor even the average rate of profit; they can limit themselves to a minimum rate of profit, and even at times forego profits altogether, which again favors the development of large-scale farms."[161]

Applied to the Kolkhoz, this means that an evaluation of its economy in terms of investment and profit would make very little sense, to say nothing of the lack of figures required for such an evaluation. Thus, we find recorded only the sums invested by the Government in the mechanization of the Kolkhoz and figures indicating the degree of mechanization achieved, as represented by the number of tractors and combines in use. Finally, we have data on how much of its production the Kolkhoz contributed to the State.

Consider the factor of investments. According to the official *Handbook of the Soviet Union*,[162] investments in socialized agriculture during the four and one-quarter years of the first Five-Year Plan totaled 10.8 billion rubles, 50 per cent in excess of the sum originally allotted. Of this total, 3 billion rubles were spent on the Kolkhozy and the Machine and Tractor Stations. The Kolkhozy and the M.T.S. themselves invested an additional 1.7 billion rubles from their own funds. The 3 billion rubles invested by the State went for agricultural machinery, organization of the M.T.S., extensive irrigation and reclamation work; also for farm buildings (modern cattle barns, silo towers, garages, repair shops), dwellings, clubhouses, and other communal structures. As a result, the basic capital of collectivized agriculture (including construction) increased from 1.37 billion rubles on January 1, 1928 to 13.35 billion rubles on January 1, 1933.[163] The value of farm property (tractors, implements, and means of transportation) increased from 170 mil-

[160] Stalin, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

[161] *Ibid.*

[162] *Russia, U.S.S.R.A., Complete Handbook* (New York, 1932).

[163] The state farms (sovkhozy) are "one of the forms into which the policy leading to collectivization evolved." See W. Ladejinsky, "Soviet Grain Farms," *Foreign Agriculture* (October, 1938). Since the state farm is, however, "a large agricultural enterprise worked by hired labor and owned, financed, organized, and managed by the Government," it is outside the scope of our present discussion.

lion to 3,990 million rubles on January 1, 1934. By that time the value of all machinery amounted to 5.3 billion rubles.[164]

The increase in tractors, power capacity, and combines in the period from 1933 to 1938 can be gleaned from Table 11, taken by Volin from Pravda of March 11, 1938. These figures obviously indicate a steady increase in mechanization:

TABLE 11

NUMBER OF TRACTORS AND COMBINES ON FARMS IN THE SOVIET UNION, 1933–1938

Year	Number in Thousands	Power Capacity — 1,000 h.p.	
		Tractors	Combines
1933	210.9	3,209.2	25.4
1934	276.4	4,462.8	32.3
1935	360.3	6,184.0	50.3
1936	422.7	7,672.4	87.8
1937	454.5	8,385.0	128.8
1938	483.5	9,256.2	153.5

The levy of grain, by far the most important of the farm products collected by the Government, increased enormously between the years 1928 and 1937. It rose in this period from less than 12 million short tons to over 32 million tons. Volin makes this significant statement: "It [the grain levy] was high even in years of poor crops, judging from Stalin's statement that Government grain procurements during the past 3 years, which presumably included the drought years of 1936 and 1938, were never lower than 29 million tons (1.6 billion poods). The great bulk of this grain was obtained, of course, from collectives."

The way in which the farm products were collected has been described before, but we should here add a few more details. The Government collects its share of the Kolkhoz' production, or rather, its return on the investment, on the basis of government-fixed prices. The prices, of course, are low. The proportion delivered to the Government, compared with that set aside for other accounts, can be calculated from Table 12, which indicates the percentages of grain and potatoes deducted from the harvest.

If we compare the deductions of grain delivered to the Govern-

164 *Russia, U.S.S.R.A., Complete Handbook*, p. 226.

TABLE 12*

PERCENTAGES OF GRAIN AND POTATOES DEDUCTED FROM THE HARVEST

Sold to Government at Low Price		About 4%
To M.T.S.		
	Grain	3%
	Potatoes	3 Dozen per Hectare
For Insurance and Seed		
	Grain	12% of Remainder
	Potatoes	7%
For the Old and Sick		
	Grain	2%
	Potatoes	2%
Day Nursery and Crêche		
	Grain	1.5%
	Potatoes	1.5%
Livestock		
	Grain (Inferior)	12%
	Potatoes (Small)	10%

* See Russell, *op. cit.*, pp. 330 f.

ment and the M.T.S. with those assigned to the Kolkhoz, we obtain a proportion of 7 per cent to 25.5 per cent. Summed up, all deductions amount to 32.5 per cent, or roughly to one-third of the grain harvest.[165] What remains after these deductions is, as we have seen, distributed among the members according to the number of labor-days credited to each during the year.

The member then is free (or at least was free prior to the war) to sell all surplus from his Kolkhoz share of crops, as well as from his individual farmstead, either to the cooperatives or to the market. By the fall of 1932, according to the *Handbook*,[166] there were 20,000 collective farm booths and stands in towns located near the Kolkhozy. In addition to the regular day-to-day trade, fairs were often organized at which Kolkhozy from one or several districts participated. This helped to strengthen the economy of the Kolkhoz and to improve the provisioning of the city worker.[167]

Since practically all economic relationships are carried on through a highly developed kind of barter, with only a slight portion of

165 Payments to tractor drivers of the M.T.S. were modified in 1939, prior to which time wages were paid both in cash and in kind. Since January, 1939, the Government has paid minimum cash wages, while the Kolkhoz has supplied the balance of the wages. See Volin's article in *Foreign Agriculture* (March, 1940), p. 144, note 21.

166 *Russia, U.S.S.R.A., Complete Handbook*, p. 225.

167 *Ibid.*

the produce sold to the market, variations in prices affect the Kolkhoz to an insignificant degree. As Volin aptly sums it up, the result is that "Soviet agriculture, unlike its counterpart in capitalistic countries, knows no crises of overproduction or price recessions caused by business depressions. It is not bedeviled by technological unemployment, in spite of increasing mechanization." [168]

Practical Applications

In summing up our findings concerning the Kolkhoz, we must point out that *many of the features of both the F.S.A. farms and the Ejido are variations or direct imitations of the Kolkhoz.* For example: the increase of agricultural output through cooperative large-scale farming; the improvement of standards through cooperation; several of the membership requirements; the internal self-government supervised and controlled by Government agencies; work relations and compensation for work; again, the degree of cooperation characterized by common production and individual consumption; and, finally, methods of financing. All these show characteristics developed originally by the Kolkhoz and then consciously adapted to particular conditions by the F.S.A. and the Ejido.

This must be the conclusion of any impartial observer, notwithstanding assertions to the contrary. One commentator says: "Most of the men who were instrumental in setting up the F.S.A. cooperative corporation farms had no idea that they were developing an agricultural pattern already in existence in other countries; many of them do not know it even now." [169] This assertion can hardly be accepted as valid in the case of the policy-making officials of the F.S.A. Some of them are known to have visited Soviet Russia and to have studied the effects of collectivization of agriculture, before the establishment of the F.S.A. cooperative farms. The influence of the Soviet example on the protagonists of the collective Ejido in Mexico has been openly acknowledged.[170] In Australia, in 1943, the Federal Government decided to emulate "the Soviet scheme of collective farming in certain of its aspects."*

Were it not for reasons of domestic politics, the denial of such knowledge would make little sense. Experience has already refuted

[168] From Volin's article in *Foreign Agriculture* (May, 1939), p. 175.

[169] Eaton, *op. cit.*, p. 246.

[170] Simpson, *op. cit.*, p. 33, note 35.

* See Australian News and Information Bureau *Bulletin*, June 6, 1943.

the suspicion that cooperation will necessarily lead to an emulation of the political system of Soviet Russia. Cooperative communities can be established, and will function, under any political regime which is not directly hostile.

One distinction between the Kolkhoz and the other cooperative experiments under discussion is considered to exist in the different method of establishment. The F.S.A. farms and the Ejido have been based on voluntary participation. Theoretically, membership in the Kolkhoz is likewise voluntary, but actually it is generally accepted to have been a matter of enforcement. To quote Stalin again, when he condemned those who were bent on "bureaucratically decreeing the collective farm movement," he declared with unmistakable emphasis that "collective farms cannot be set up by force. To do so would be stupid and reactionary."[171] Despite this outspoken declaration, the weight of Government authority, as well as the economic pressure it could and did exert, obviously produced what must be considered indirect compulsion. It is, moreover, a question as to whether or not compulsion can be entirely dispensed with, where the Government sponsors a certain type of development. As far as the Ejido is concerned, there exists at least some indication of compulsion.[172]

The genuine and basic difference between the Kolkhoz and the other Government-sponsored cooperative communities is found, rather, in the scope of its application and the degree to which it is backed by the political system of the country. While the Ejido and the F.S.A. cooperative farms comprise a relatively small segment of the rural rehabilitation program of their respective countries, the Kolkhoz is today virtually the exclusive type of rural organization in Soviet Russia, and this because it was accepted not only as a means of rehabilitation but also as an instrument of proletarianization of the peasants. In addition to serving economic ends, such as increase of farm production, it has helped to achieve a political aim: the socialization of the countryside.

In the fulfillment of these goals, the Kolkhoz must be considered a success. We have seen how, even in poor years, the Government was able to extract increased quantities of farm products from the Kolkhoz. But the special ability of this farming cooperative to serve the aims of the State is demonstrated today in this most critical

[171] Stalin, *op. cit.*, p. 102.
[172] Simpson, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

period of Soviet history. Williams points out the following adaptation of the Kolkhoz to the war emergency: (1) Contingents of newly-trained women, replacing men who joined the army, are operating the tractors, reapers, and threshers with undiminished efficiency. (2) The minimum number of labor-days has been raised to 150, and the minimum age for membership has been reduced from 16 to 14. (3) To compensate for the acreage lost to the Germans, the Kolkhozy are increasing the area sown and are planting "acres of friendship," the produce of which goes to persons rendered destitute by enemy plunder and destruction. (4) The Kolkhozy have proved their ability to accommodate farmers from ravaged regions, who often bring tractors and implements with them. (5) They are taking in orphaned children and assuming responsibility for them. (6) They are, finally, serving as rest homes for convalescing soldiers.[173] The Kolkhoz has not merely achieved but in fact surpassed the hopes envisaged for it by the Soviet Government.

Nevertheless, this does not mean that the Kolkhoz is free of conflict in other matters. Many vexing problems still becloud the picture. Chief among them, to cite Williams on the adverse side, as well, are the following: (1) mismanagement and waste (rats infesting the granaries); (2) obsession with the machine to the detriment of farm animals; (3) too many conflicting orders from the central authorities; (4) too much button-pushing on the ancient wooden abacus. In addition, there are the problems imposed by human nature, such as the inability of the older people to adjust themselves to new ways, and the far more fateful conflict arising from the division of interests between allegiance to the Kolkhoz on the one hand, and to the individual farmstead on the other.

Vexing problems, no doubt, and of no easy solution. However, they appear minor, as Williams concludes, when compared with those already surmounted; and they are being overshadowed by the achievements of collectivization. According to Williams, the Kolkhoz appears to have won the support of even its former opponents and to have converted them into ardent sponsors. Nevertheless, *the applicability of the Kolkhoz to the postwar resettlement cooperative is limited.* This is so particularly because of its strong tie-up with the political system of the country. There will be no such governmental power in most countries to sponsor postwar resettlement

173 Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 117.

of this kind. Other motives and other means of organization will have to be found. Only in so far as Soviet Russia is concerned, does the Kolkhoz probably represent the most appropriate solution of rural problems.

CHAPTER IX

THE KVUTZA[174]

Kvutza (plural *Kvutzot*) is a Hebrew word for group. It is the name of the Jewish agricultural settlements in Palestine which practice the extreme form of comprehensive cooperation. The Kvutza is, however, only one of three types which developed in connection with the Zionist enterprise, the other two being the Smallholders' Cooperative Settlement, combining individual ownership and cooperative features, and the traditional village, based on individual ownership of home and land.

Origins of the Kvutza

Even a highly critical appraisal of the Zionist achievement in Palestine admits that "these newer types of cooperative settlements, with their emphasis on mutual aid, constitute one of the finest accomplishments . . ."[175] The steady growth of these settlements is an indication of their vital role in the economy of Jewish Palestine. Their success may come as a surprise after the practically unbroken line of failure of similar Jewish attempts in America. (See Chapter I.) If we consider the origin of the Kvutza, however, the reason for this difference in results becomes apparent. While the Jewish cooperatives in America were Utopian, the Kvutza originated in the same normal way that any other community develops.

The task of the Zionist Organization, intent on laying a sound and lasting foundation for its enterprises, was mainly one of establishing a permanent agricultural basis for the Jewish Homeland.

[174] This Chapter is based on Henrik Infield's *Cooperative Living in Palestine* (New York: The Dryden Press, 1944).

[175] See Research Institute on Peace and Postwar Problems, *Study Course*, Unit VI (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1943), p. 12.

This task was undertaken in 1908 – about ten years after Theodore Herzl had founded the Organization by forming the Palestine Land Development Company and putting the sociologist Arthur Ruppin at the head of the Company's Palestine Office. Two main principles of conduct were formulated. First, all land acquired by the Organization was to remain forever the property of the Jewish nation; second, the land was to be cultivated only by the Jews themselves. Thus, from the very beginning, land bought with means collected by the National Fund, established for this purpose in 1901, was not given to private owners, but instead leased to the immigrant settler for the biblical period of seven times seven years, against a stipulated annual rent of 2 per cent. The amount of land allotted to each settler was determined by his estimated capacity to till it with no help other than that of the members of his own family.

The practice of these basic principles lent to the whole resettlement enterprise its special character. Private ownership of land was banned, and work was made obligatory for every settler. Beyond the observance of these tenets, the Palestine Office was wise enough to let the settler work out all other problems by himself, intervening only when the general task of resettlement hit a snag. A snag developed soon enough: it became clear, after the first few seasons, that individual settlement would not do. There were, on the one hand, the limited funds of the Zionist Organization, and, on the other, the inexperience of the settlers, who often were unable to endure the physical strain of hard labor and the unfamiliar climate. It looked as if the available funds would run out more quickly than they could be collected, without producing any of the urgently needed results. Then the idea of settling the colonists in groups instead of individually was conceived. The technique of group settlement offered obvious advantages under the circumstances. To begin with, it was relatively less expensive; it could help to increase efficiency by utilizing the experience of the few experts, who would teach the less experienced; finally, it could sustain the losses resulting from the failures of individuals, without dire consequences.

Actually, as Ruppin afterward stated, there was no choice in the matter: the question was not whether group settlement was preferable to individual settlement; it was rather one of either group settlement or no settlement at all.[176]

[176] Arthur Ruppin, *The Agricultural Colonization of the Zionist Organization in Palestine*. Translated by R. J. Feiwel (London, 1926).

Group settlement did not, however, immediately take the form of the Kvutza. This type of socio-economic organization evolved only step by step, in response to and under pressure of circumstances. The Palestine Office realized that the first group would need a trained manager to supervise and direct their work. An expert was hired and put in charge. Under his direction, the members were supposed to work together, to receive advances on the expected income, and to share among themselves any profit at the end of the year. But conflicts at once arose between the manager and the group. He looked on his position as one whose main concern was efficiency and profitability, while to the group the work signified the fulfilment of a mission. The conflict finally led the community to request that the expert be recalled. When this was refused, several of the more experienced members quit and started out on their own: to continue in the same manner, to work together and share the profit – but without a manager.

Soon, however, they had to realize they could not expect any profits for a long time to come, and, making a virtue of necessity, they decided to forget about "mine and thine," and to hold "all things in common." Everyone was to work according to his best ability and to receive in return all he needed from the available goods. Thus, in 1909 originated the first Kvutza, which is still in existence at the same place – at the point where the River Jordan leaves Lake Tiberias. It is now called *Dagania A*.

Other groups followed the example of Dagania A, but these included not more than six communities in 1921. Meanwhile, the Balfour Declaration of 1917, bringing political recognition of the aims of the Zionist Organization, helped, as did the end of the First World War, to increase considerably the flow of immigrants to Palestine. Young people from the pogrom-ridden areas of eastern Europe were particularly attracted by a form of society which undertook to realize their two ideals: a social order built on justice, and the rebuilding of the Jewish Homeland. To them the idea of going to Palestine came to mean joining a Kvutza, and the number of these communities has since grown steadily from year to year. A movement begun with ten members in 1909 has expanded to include, at the last official count (September, 1940) 79 settlements with a membership of more than 20,000, and a cultivated area of 97,500 acres, out of the total area in Jewish agriculture of 392,500 acres. The entire Jewish rural population of Palestine

was 142,000 at the time, and the total number of settlements 257.[177]

Kvutzot Founded by Jews of "All Nations"

There are two ways in which membership can be acquired; either by forming a group of aspirants who intend to start a new Kvutza or by joining one already existing. In the first case, the process begins usually outside of Palestine. Youth connected with the Zionist Pioneer movement, planning to emigrate to Palestine and establish a Kvutza, may form a group, which prepares itself for this goal by training in agriculture or other vocations useful to cooperative practice. At the same time they live together and pool their resources. In some countries the Pioneer Organization rents or buys farms to serve as training centers for such groups. These farms, like the two of the American Pioneer Organization at Creamridge and Hightstown, New Jersey, are run exactly like the Palestine Kvutzot, with the one difference that their main purpose is training.

Whatever their preparation, groups formed in this manner usually emigrate to Palestine in a body. If their number is small, they may on arrival join some existing Kvutza or, otherwise, work toward establishing themselves as a new community. In the latter case they continue as before – live together, go out to work, and pool their resources. Sometimes they remain in the city for a while on construction or other jobs, and then move to the country, where they hire out to farmers or orchard owners. After several years of training the group may then receive land on which to settle. The allotment must be approved by the Agricultural Department of the Jewish Agency, as well as by the Agricultural Center of their own union, namely, the General Federation of Jewish Labor or the Mizrachi (Orthodox) Labor Federation, as the case may be. Upon approval, the group receives the necessary credits from the Foundation Fund.

In recent years the minimum number of families required for a new Kvutza has been set at sixty. It was found that this number was necessary to make large-scale farming possible and to permit of a variety of relationships sufficiently stimulating to the social life of the group. The area allotted per family, or per unit of man and woman, is calculated on the basis of 5 to 7 acres of irrigated land and 22 to 30 acres of non-irrigated.

177 Ruppin, "Agricultural Achievements in Palestine," *Contemporary Jewish Record,* Vol. V, No. 3 (June, 1942).

Any Jewish male or female person over 18 years of age, adhering to the tenets of the Zionist Organization, is eligible to membership. The applicant has to pass, however, through a period of probation lasting not longer than one year; the usual period is six months. During this time the candidate lives and works like the members themselves, except that he lacks the privilege of voting and keeps his personal belongings to himself – the two signs of his inferior status.

The vote on admission is taken by the General Assembly upon request of the candidate; a simple majority decides. If the decision is favorable, the candidate hands over his belongings to the common store and immediately becomes a full-fledged member. There is no seniority or any other formal distinction between a member of long standing and one just admitted.

The population of the Kvutzot, like that of Palestine in general, is youthful. The proportion of all Jews in Palestine who fall into the age category of 20 to 39 is given as 42.6 per cent. (The corresponding figure for the Arabs of Palestine is 31 per cent, and for the U.S.A., 31.8 per cent.) Only 12 per cent of the Jewish population of Palestine are over 50 (as compared with 17.2 per cent for the U.S.A.). The percentage of young people in the Kvutza is even higher than that for Palestine. As Ruppin points out, it is "the young settlers between the ages of 20 and 25" who prefer the Kvutza.

Although the membership is exclusively Jewish, certain cultural differences can be observed. The majority hail from eastern Europe, from Poland, the Baltic countries, from Russia, Rumania. Their cultural homogeneity is much greater than that of those who come from central or western Europe. This unifying force lies in the more intense attachment of these members to Jewish tradition and in their common acquaintance with the Yiddish language. The youth of central or western Europe, in contrast, has usually been assimilated, and knows only the language of its host nation – German, French, Dutch, or English.

Yet, these cultural divergencies seem to create no real difficulties in the Kvutza. The common ideal, a way of life new to all, and the use of Hebrew – the language of the Old Testament – make the task of adjustment about equally stimulating for everybody. In these settlements Jews of "all nations" are moulded into a new type, the Kvutza type of Jewry.

The membership includes youth who have grown up in Palestine itself. These are the sons and daughters of immigrants or of Yemenite Jews.

As for social background, all classes are represented: some come from wealthy homes, others from the poorest families, with the majority from that large group of Jews who, though truly destitute, still hold fast to a middle-class attitude. This is corroborated by the fact that a high proportion (56.65 per cent) of the members have had a higher education.[178]

Because of the long period of probation, expulsions from the Kvutza are rare. If, after admission, a member becomes so obnoxious to the group as to make elimination necessary, there is seldom any need of formal expulsion. In most cases the person is given to understand how the others feel and resigns.

Several causes of resignation are discernible. There are, first, matters of principle, involving the eternal controversy as to the superiority of the Kvutza over the Smallholders' Settlement. Those who feel they would prefer the moderately cooperative arrangements of the latter often leave for such a settlement. Then, there is the problem of personal adjustment. Those who are unable to establish contacts in the group, or whose ambitions are frustrated by the inability to win the respect of the others, often prefer to quit. At times, like that of a so-called boom in the city, the attraction of higher wages proves too strong, particularly for members who have parents to support. They take a leave-of-absence from which they may never return. There are, finally, political motives for resigning. Depending on the political point of view, the Kvutza may appear too conservative or too radical. There are those who may consider it politically reactionary; they prefer to leave and fight for socialism by "direct" action. Some of these members have found their way even to Biro-Bidjan.

In general, however, the rate of turnover is relatively low: 14 per cent in the more recently formed, and only 6 per cent in the older Kvutzot.[179]

178 See Walter Preuss, *The Jewish Labor Movement in Palestine* (Vienna, 1936).

179 See *1935-36 Handbook of the Jewish Communal Village in Palestine* (Jerusalem: Keren Kayemeth Leisrael and Keren Hayesod, 1938), p. 6.

Kvutza Affiliations

The Kvutza is a vital part of the entire scheme of Jewish resettlement. Although practicing as extreme a degree of cooperation as the Hutterite communities, it is, nevertheless, anything but isolationist. It maintains close relations with the two most influential politico-economic agencies of national reconstruction in Palestine: the Jewish Agency and the Histadrut. In addition, the Kvutza has produced affiliations of its own which tie close together communities with similar ideology.

Most significant among the Kvutza's external relations are those with the Jewish Agency. This agency, established in 1929, is composed of Zionist and non-Zionist members "willing to assist in the establishment of the Jewish National Home." Its chairman is the President of the Zionist Organization. The Jewish Agency is the organ through which the mandate power, Great Britain, deals with the Jewish settlement in Palestine, and it enjoys semi-governmental status. Affiliated with the Jewish Agency are the Zionist fund-raising and distributing agencies – the National Fund, established in 1901, and the Foundation Fund, established in 1921. Both of these are of utmost importance for the development of the Kvutza.

The National Fund raises money from Jews all over the world and uses it for the purchase of land in Palestine. The Foundation Fund uses its money, collected in the same way, for the establishment and assistance of rural settlements.

The settlers' path is smoothed by the Foundation Fund in many respects. The Fund provides a central waterworks for a new settlement: it assigns a "town-planning" expert to work out a layout of the buildings according to the most modern principles; it assists in draining the swamps and in removing shrubs and stones; it undertakes afforestation of part of the land; finally, it directs its Agricultural Experimental Station at Rehobot to draw up for each new settlement a suitable farming scheme, including an estimate of costs.[180]

The Department of Agricultural Settlement, belonging to the Foundation Fund, acts in relation to the Kvutzot in much the same way as the F.S.A. to the cooperative corporation farms or the Ejido Bank to the Ejidos, with one difference: the funds allotted are not

180 J. Elazari Volcani, "Jewish Colonization in Palestine," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* (November, 1932). Also see Ruppin, *loc. cit.*

appropriated by the legislative branch of the Government but are disbursed by the agency itself. This Department is "entrusted with the general planning and organization of settlement; it determines the colonization budget, the choice of settlers, and the distribution of assigned land, as well as the financial and technical supervision of the work. The Technical Office of the Department prepares the general building plans for the various types of construction." [181]

The General Federation of Jewish Labor, or Histadrut, to which the Kvutza is related in its capacity of a workers' agricultural cooperative, has been called "one of the most unusual labor organizations in the world." [182] The Histadrut combines the usual trade-union features with political, cultural, and social activities by means of an association built on direct membership, not on the customary vocational trade-union affiliations. Of significance for the Kvutza is the Histadrut's emphasis on cooperative functions, facilitated by the fact that "unlike those of many other countries, the cooperatives, because they were the first in the field, have not and probably will not have the same struggle with intrenched competitive industry and finance." [183]

Like the industrial unions, the cooperative societies are not separated from the main body of the Histadrut but are rather departments whereby the Histadrut attempts to facilitate the various phases of the economic life of the workers. Members of the Kvutza belong to the Jewish Agricultural Workers Union and are affiliates of the Nir Cooperative Society Ltd., which includes all the Jewish cooperative rural settlements in Palestine. The Kvutzot sell their products through the Histadrut's agricultural marketing cooperative, the Tenuva. They purchase their goods through the consumers' cooperative, Hamashbir, and have their books audited by the Histadrut. And finally, the education of their children, and much of their adult education, is arranged by the Histadrut's Education Office.

Besides the relationships described above, there are certain ties which bind each Kvutza to one of the three main roof-organizations

181 A. Ulitzur, *Two Decades of Keren Hayesod, A Survey in Fact and Figures, 1921-40* (Jerusalem, 1940), p. 46.

182 See *Report of the Registrar of Cooperative Societies* (Jerusalem, 1938), p. 35.

183 Harry Viteles, "The Cooperative Movement," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* (November, 1932).

called Kibbutz: (1) The United Group (Kibbutz Hameuhad); (2) The Society of Communal Groups (Hever Hakvutzot); and (3) The All Palestine Group (Kibbutz Arzi).

The tenets of the three groups reflect three main systems of ideas which have exerted, and which still exert, a decisive influence on the Jewish pioneers in Palestine. The United Group is characterized by a strong emphasis on the value of manual labor and by the trade-union point of view. The All Palestine Group accepts the ideas of the Jewish Youth movement organized into The Young Guard (Hashomer Hatzair). The Society of Communal Groups perpetuates the ideals of A. D. Gordon, who saw in the physical reunion with the Holy Land a kind of supernatural rebirth, for himself as well as for the Jewish people.

The three systems are not mutually exclusive; it is rather the special emphasis which differentiates them. And the Kvutza's spirit results from a synthesis of the three ideologies.

Kvutzot belonging to the same roof-organization are closely tied in other than ideological matters. There is a certain informal understanding about the seasonal planning, and more exchange of information and experience than among the Kvutzot of different roof-organizations. In case of emergency, they sometimes lend personnel to one another.

Management

Compared with external relations, the internal administration of the Kvutza is simple. The main authority rests with the General Assembly of members. Its convention, obligatory once a year, is frequently called, whenever a problem of common concern arises. Decisions are arrived at by raising the hand; a majority vote settles the issue.

The General Assembly elects committees for all phases of community life, of which the most important are the Management Committee and the Work Assignment Committee. Others include the Cultural Committee, the Housing Committee, and the Educational Committee. Most committees consist of three or more members, elected for a term of one year. Only the Management Committee has a chairman, and this because of legal requirements; all the others simply divide the various phases of activity among the members, who meet and deliberate without formalities.

No office or administrative function yields compensation, either

in money – work is not paid for in money – or in privileges, for all "extracurricular" activity is carried on as a voluntary contribution to the common welfare. In the election of members to policy-making or managerial positions, however, ability, experience, and capacity for leadership are weighty considerations. In this way, the holding of office implies genuine distinction.

Economic Basis

This is literally a world without property. The Kvutza practices what is probably the highest possible degree of cooperation. There is virtually no private property and, in the final analysis, no group property. Should a Kvutza disband, there would be no "sharing out," but all property would revert to the national agencies. In its complete absence of property, this Palestinian experiment surpasses even that of the Hutterites.

The Kvutza owns only what it produces. This is the economic basis for its scale of social values, at the top of which stands the "good worker." No one can belong who is unable or unwilling to put in a good day's work. Only the invalids, the sick, the pregnant, the children, and the aged, in short the physically incapable, are exempt from this obligation. Even a guest, if he remains more than three days, is expected to pick up the shovel.

Agriculture is the principal occupation. Additional sources of income include small-scale industries (which many Kvutzot have developed to a point where goods and labor can be marketed) and work on the outside. The proportion of income derived from the different sources varies, depending on the size and age of the colony. The larger the community, the more varied its activities, and agriculture, though always predominant, is by no means the exclusive interest. In the newer, less stabilized Kvutzot there is more dependence on the outside labor of members. Ein Harod, a well established older Kvutza, reported the following distribution of the work performed in 1936; agriculture, 57 per cent; handicraft and industry, 12 per cent; outside labor, 4 per cent. A more recently settled Kvutza, Kefar Hahoresh, on the contrary, reported this distribution: agriculture, 22 per cent; handicraft and industry, 0; outside labor, 44 per cent.[184]

Since the main economic goal of the Kvutza is to provide its own subsistence, it tries to cultivate many branches of farming.

184 See *1935-36 Handbook of the Jewish Communal Village in Palestine*, p. 10.

Diversified farming not only supplies the members with most of their food but also makes them more independent of price fluctuations and facilitates full employment in all seasons. The Kvutzot, being run as large-scale farms, employ the most modern techniques of agriculture and stock-breeding. Field crops, irrigated forage, vegetables, fruit and nurseries, dairy products, sheep, and poultry represent the chief branches of agriculture. The comparative importance of the various activities is indicated in Table 13.

TABLE 13*

INCOME FROM THE VARIOUS BRANCHES OF AGRICULTURE, 1935–36 (IN PERCENTAGES)

Name of Kvutza	Field Crops	Fruits and Nurseries	Dairy Products	Poultry	Sheep and Bees
Merhavia	44	6	35	11	4
Dagania A	16	25	51	8	—
Ein Harod	20	28	40	10	2

* Taken from *1935–36 Handbook of the Jewish Communal Village in Palestine* (Jerusalem: Keren Kayemeth Leisrael and Keren Hayesod, 1938).

Conditions of Work

Seasonal planning is subject to approval by the General Assembly. The disposition of day-to-day work is in the hands of the Work Assignment Committee, which meets daily and prepares a schedule for the following day, hung usually on the blackboard in the dining-hall. The skilled workers, in charge of one of the several branches, are as a rule kept on the job for which they are best fitted. The unskilled laborers form a kind of mobile manpower reserve, distributed to points where they are most needed. Only at times of hurried harvesting, or during the few days of vintage, are all available hands concentrated on one and the same task. Work that is considered "unproductive," such as kitchen duty, is done by all members in turn. Thus, specialization as well as versatility finds its place in the Kvutza.

Work brings no personal compensation whatever; even the money earned on the outside has to be delivered to the common purse. There is no work card, no advance wage, and no sharing of profit. Every one, regardless of his skill or efficiency, receives in return for his work, according to his needs, whatever the Kvutza has to offer

in goods and services. In spite of the absence of the profit motive, there appears to be virtually no slacking in the work, as statistics on job attendance and on achievements show. In 1936, to cite only the figures of two Kvutzot, representing the minimum and the maximum of lost work-days for that year, 88.3 days were lost to work in Ginegar, and 110.3 in Ein Harod. In both sets of figures are included 58 Sabbaths and holidays, and, respectively, 3 and 2.4 days of heavy rain; also 11 days in Ginegar and 12 days in Ein Harod for the annual vacation due each member. The balance of days, 16 at Ginegar and 37.9 at Ein Harod, were lost to work because of illness, convalescence, and childbirth.

Likewise, contrary to common opinion, absence of the profit motive does not seem to affect work morale. This surprising result is attributable to the pioneer character of the settlements; to ideological motives, particularly the sense of an historic mission; and more than anything else, to satisfactions of a spiritual character inherent in the life of the Kvutza.

To indicate only a few of the latter, there is, first, the pride of belonging. The Kvutza is looked upon as a vanguard of labor in Palestine, and provides the whole Zionist colony with many prominent leaders. To belong, gives a member, automatically, high social status. There is the further sense of being a significant part of the whole; no decision is taken in the Kvutza without the direct consent of each member. Finally, there is the sense of social responsibility, stimulated by the novel experience of self-imposed discipline. To these factors must be added the "we-feeling," an emotion analogous to the sense of roots which a well-meaning family produces, created here not by ties of blood but by relationships of one's own free choice.

A normal work-day begins at about 4:30 A.M. Breakfast is served from 6 to 6:30 A.M.; work then continues until 11:30, when lunch is served. At 2 P.M. work is resumed and continues until dusk, with a short interval for tea at 4 P.M., but never later than 7 o'clock, when the bell rings for dinner. The average working day ranges from ten to twelve hours.

There is no penalty for absence from work nor for the rare instances of slacking. If a member lets down on his job, his friends take it upon themselves to investigate. Often, an informal talk produces the desired result. Only when all other remedial measures fail is the case referred to the General Assembly, where the delin-

quent can plead his cause as fully as he wishes. Resignation, rather than expulsion, generally ends hopeless cases.

More serious difficulty is created by what Ben-Shalom calls "exaggerated devotion to work."[185] Members so obsessed engender conflict. They may insist on carrying out their troublesome good intentions. They may work too hard or demand too much consideration in the planning of work and in the distribution of implements.

Social Cooperation

As with work, every other aspect of life in the Kvutza is governed by the spirit of comprehensive cooperation. The houses, like those of the Hutterites, are only dormitories, but with this difference: parents and children live in different parts of the settlement. The prevailing type of home is the wooden bungalow, though in recently established communities some of the members still have to live in tents. The furniture is of the simplest kind – usually not more than an iron cot with a spread, a table, one or two chairs, a lamp. The closet, as a rule, is only a corner of the room partitioned off by a cotton curtain, with a few hooks driven into the wall. All the houses are wired for electricity, most have screened doors and windows, many have tiled floors. The well-established Kvutzot devote much attention to the aesthetic side of housing; they plant bushes and flowers around their bungalows; also, they provide separate quarters for the married and the bachelors.

The first solid building, concrete or stone, that goes up in the Kvutza is the cow-house; next comes the children's house; and then the dining-hall, which is also the town hall. The General Assembly meets here, and all the affairs concerning the community as a whole, such as lectures, concerts, and recitals, take place in this largest enclosed room of the settlement. The main function of the dining-hall, however, is indicated by its name. Four times a day the members meet here to partake of the meals prepared in the central kitchen, while the children have theirs in the dining-room of the children's house. In some of the Kvutzot the kitchen is equipped with the most elaborate modern devices; in others, both kitchen and dining-hall are simple, in a few cases even primitive. The food, though plentiful, is not greatly varied, consisting mostly of products raised in the Kvutza.

185 Avraham Ben-Shalom, *Deep Furrows*. Translated by Frances Burnce (New York: Hashomer Hatzair Organization, 1937), p. 246.

Dining and kitchen service – cooking, waiting on tables, cleaning-up, dish-washing – ranking as unproductive, is generally not coveted. Every member has to take his turn at it, except the chef, who, like all the other skilled workers, stays permanently with his job. A worker serves from twelve to fifteen members.[186]

Despite the excellent and low-priced wine, there is very little drinking in Palestine. In the Kvutza, wine is put on the table only on Friday evenings, holidays, and other festive occasions. Tobacco is used more liberally; cigarettes and tobacco are distributed in limited quantities.

An indication of the extreme degree of cooperation practiced is in the matter of clothes. Up to very recently, only shoes and toothbrushes were privately owned. Every member received two outfits, one for work and one for leisure time. Clothes in need of cleaning were brought to the laundry, and the clean garments were redistributed without consideration for previous ownership. Today, with greater prosperity, most of the Kvutzot can pay more attention to this sort of thing, and those who care to may keep their own outfit permanently. Many, however, still prefer the old system. Outfits for the men consist of one plain and one more elaborate shirt, a pair of work pants and a pair made of finer material, shorts, undershirts, shoes, socks, and a large-brimmed straw hat or a cap. The girls, while at work, wear a simple cotton dress, or shorts and blouse, and the same kind of straw hat; after work, most of them wear a dress of the "sarafan" or pinafore type and usually leave their heads uncovered.

One of the attractions of the Kvutza is the rich intellectual activity and the wealth of recreational opportunities. The monotony of rural life is hardly ever to be met with in any of these settlements. Including among its members a large percentage of highly educated and, not rarely, brilliant minds, the Kvutza can satisfy recreational needs mostly from its own resources. A stimulating sharing of knowledge, in discussions, seminar courses, and lectures, is carried on which produces the most active forms of adult education. Every Kvutza has a library of its own, stocked with both technical books and the better type of fiction.

Most of the settlements have dramatic groups and modern dance teams. An institution originating in the Kvutza is the so-called "judgment-day," a mock trial of its own weaknesses – a perform-

186 See *1935-36 Handbook of the Jewish Communal Village in Palestine*, p. 9.

ance halfway between discussion and show and held every year or two.

In addition to home talent, the Kvutza receives outside support in its cultural activity. The Education Office of the Histadrut supplies excellent lecturers on any subject desired; it also arranges concert tours by resident or visiting artists.

From time to time, groups of members travel to a neighboring town, to see a moving picture or to visit a Tel-Aviv touring theatre.

Holidays are observed as national festivals, one of the most attractive being Pentecost. On this occasion, carts loaded with the first fruits and flowers converge from the Valley of Jezreel towards Haifa, where a parade is held.

There is very little sports activity in the Kvutza; only a few members belong to the Workers' Sports Organization, the Hapoel. The sports preferred are soccer and softball.

Membership in the Workers' Sick Fund, for which the Kvutza pays a fee of about $3 a month per member, secures for each resident full medical care. According to Revusky, by 1936 the Sick Fund maintained about 78 health centers, 14 dental clinics, 4 X-ray stations, 30 nurseries, 78 apothecaries and other medical establishments, in addition to 3 hospitals and 2 sanitariums.[187]

Each larger-sized Kvutza maintains its own dispensary, providing first aid and medical care in lighter cases. A physician of the Sick Fund is usually in charge of several communities in one district and visits them regularly. In spite of these provisions and every good intention, sickness creates a difficult situation. With every one occupied and only one nurse available, in the event of any grave increase in sickness the patients have to be left to themselves, and they often lack necessary care. In the more serious cases, they are taken to the hospital for treatment, but in all cases the feeling of having become a burden to the group aggravates the situation for the patient himself.

It is the same with members afflicted by a chronic disease or invalidism. Very often the Kvutza, like a family, will go to any length to take proper care of its sick, even to the extent of sending them to a different country, if the physician so recommends. Yet, not rarely the invalid will prefer to resign rather than to become a burden to the community.

[187] See Abraham Revusky, *The Histadrut — A Labor Commonwealth in the Making* (New York: League for Labor Palestine, 1938), p. 94.

Since the membership, even in the oldest of the Kvutzot, is relatively young, the problem of old age has not yet become urgent. When it does, that it will be solved in true Kvutza spirit is indicated by the aid given to parents. Many of the members came to Palestine against the will of their parents, who opposed Zionism either on religious grounds or because of a belief in assimilation. Nevertheless, when things in eastern Europe began to go from wrong to worse, the sons did not hesitate to rally to the assistance of their parents. Each Kvutza budgeted a small sum for the purpose – only about £P 2 ($10) a month for each member, but it helped. The parents, who by now had reason to change their views about Zionism, were asked to come to live with their children in the Kvutza. Several hundred of them accepted, and have been given a separate house, where they can arrange their lives as they please – either completely separated, or participating in the activities of the settlement. Those who want to work, and are able to, are given appropriate tasks.

Children in the Kvutza

The most profound modification undoubtedly is that which the family has undergone through this cooperative pattern. With the drastic change of economic basis and with the woman's achievement of genuine equality with men, the family has almost lost its customary economic function. Marriage here does not change the status of women in the least; it is contracted only where physical and spiritual intimacy, the essence of the bond, is desired for its own sake. In the Kvutza the marriage relation is achieved when two members of opposite sex move to live in the same room. Nothing else changes in their social lives; both continue to work as before. The girl neither becomes "Mrs." nor does she change her name. She has simply become "his girl" and he "her boy."

There is a difference, though, once a child is born. Because of the unfortunately insecure future of the Kvutza, as well as that of all Jewish Palestine, it is considered advisable to make the child's origin legitimate, according to the rules of the outside world. So the parents go to the Rabbi and legalize their marriage; the child is registered under the father's name.

Although the Kvutzist, like Jews in general, consider them a blessing, children imply for the community heavy economic obligations. The sense of responsibility, and certainly that alone, leads to

the denial of offspring as long as adequate care cannot be provided for the infants. But as soon as there are means to install a nursery, the children – the "internal immigration" of Palestine – are welcomed. A pregnant mother does not work during the weeks before delivery but goes to one of the nearby hospitals of the Sick Fund. On her return, the child is immediately assigned to a trained nurse; the mother is free to suckle the infant as long as she feels like it. After complete recovery, she resumes her usual duties, her nights undisturbed by the child and her work unhampered by worry over her baby, whom she knows to be in trustworthy hands. There is one worker on duty in the children's house for every three to five children, and half of the nursery personnel is permanent, assisted by members, generally the mothers, who take three to six months' turns in child care.[188]

The separation of parents from children does not seem to lessen their mutual affection. If we may believe the testimony of observers such as a pioneer member and a former High Commissioner of Palestine, an intensification of love between child and parents results. Ben-Shalom, author of *Deep Furrows* and a member of long standing, asserts that "collective education of our children has not weakened the mutual love of parents and children, but has, in reality, strengthened it."[189] And Sir Arthur Wauchope, speaking of the children rejoining their parents after the day's work is done, attests: "I have often been witness to these meetings. The children's cries of joy and their unrestrained signs of affection show at once that the daily separation during the hours of labor causes no lessening of devotion on one side or the other. On the contrary, I believe the relationship between the parents and children is peculiarly happy in these communal communities."[190]

The children remain in the Children's Group to the age of eighteen, when they become full-fledged members of the Kvutza. The educational system, which is part of that supervised by the Education Office of the Histadrut,[191] is based on progressive meth-

[188] See *1935-36 Handbook of the Jewish Communal Village in Palestine,* p. 10.

[189] Ben-Shalom, *op. cit.,* p. 259.

[190] General Sir Arthur Wauchope, "Communal Settlement in Palestine," *Jewish Frontier* (October, 1941). See also Sholom Wurm, *The Kvutza* (New York: Habonim, 1942), p. 62.

[191] All Jewish schools in Palestine are under the general financial supervision of the Bureau of Education of the National Council (Vaad Haleumi). Teaching methods are in line with the Histadrut's progressive policy. The Education

ods. They are facilitated by the direct and continuous contact between teachers and parents. It could almost be said that from the point of view of the educator, each Kvutza is actually a parent-teachers association.

At the age of three, the children enter the kindergarten, conducted along the lines of the Montessori theory; they remain here until the age of six. They then become members of the so-called "Children's Society," which is formally run by the children, with teachers acting as advisers. As in the Kvutza proper, the children handle all their problems in general assemblies, at which one of the teachers usually presides. The execution of decisions lies with elected committees, headed by the Central Committee. The Work Assignment Committee makes out the rotary schedules for the self-assigned work of cleaning their premises, serving at table, helping in the kitchen, etc. Transgressions of discipline are not punished by the teacher, but are brought before the children's General Assembly for a hearing and the sentencing of the culprit.

The Children's Society includes all children between the ages of six and fourteen. If their number is large, they are divided into smaller groups which form units for classes as well as for work. The plan of education knows no rigid timetable; subjects are taken up spontaneously but are treated intensively and from many different points of view. The lesson usually starts with visual presentation. The language of instruction is Hebrew, a handicap being the scarcity of textbooks available in this language. Of foreign languages taught, Arabic is the most important; some Kvutzot also include English in their curriculum.

The children cultivate flower and vegetable gardens and care for their own small domestic animals. They assist in guarding the sheep, take part in the harvest, or help in the stables. Thus, at the age of ten, a Kvutza child works two hours and at fourteen as many as four hours a day.

Children over fourteen become members of the Youth Group, which receives comparatively little formal education but works up to six hours a day and, at times of urgent need, may put in a full day's work. In this way the youth of the Kvutza grows naturally into the parents' organization. In some settlements, before being

Office of the Histadrut in 1936-37 supervised 159 schools in 88 settlements which employed 356 teachers serving 5,000 pupils. See Revusky, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

admitted to full-fledged membership, the young people are given a year's leave of absence, in order to learn about outside customs before settling down for good in their own community.

Achievements of the Kvutza

The land on which to settle, as we have seen, is received from the National Fund. In recent years, however, the role of the Fund as a financing agency has been considerably reduced. While the older Kvutzot received 49 per cent of their credits from the Fund, only 14 per cent has been received by the newly established communities. Chief among the newer lending sources are the Palestine Agricultural Settlement Association (P.A.S.A.), which offers credits up to twenty years at 4 to 5 per cent interest; the Central Bank of Cooperative Institutions; the Workers' Bank; the Anglo-Palestine Bank; and independent bankers furnishing short and intermediate term loans (up to about ten years) at 6 to 8 per cent interest.

The cost of establishing a family, that is, a unit of man and woman, varies considerably in the different Kvutzot. Table 14 shows

TABLE 14*

COST OF ESTABLISHMENT IN SOME OF THE KVUTZOT (IN £P)

Name of Kvutza	No. of Families	Total Capital Investment	Cost Per Family	Year of Establishment
Gans Shmuel	54	31,650	586	1913
Dagania A	54	36,974	685	1909
Mishmar Haemek	71	50,380	710	1927
Mizra	55	42,930	781	1924
Ayanot (Sharona)	34	30,107	886	1926
Ein Harod	211	224,477	1,064	1921
Heftziba	44	47,069	1,070	1922
Beit Alfa	70	80,629	1,152	1922

* From *1935–36 Handbook*, *op. cit.*, pp. 30, 39. Data on the number of families are for the year 1936.

that it is lower in the older, and higher in the newer Kvutzot (excepting those, listed towards the end of the Table, where the land is largely irrigated).

The average cost of establishment per family unit for the older

Kvutzot is about £P 700 (*ca.* $3,500). This sum covers the following items:*

	£P
Living quarters	150
Cowsheds	125
Produce and fodder	30
Chicken houses	25
Hens	5
Farm water installation	10
Draft animals	30
Cows and share of bull	55
Agricultural implements	70
Surveys and plans	10
Preparation of land	20
Ploughing and planting	30
Bees and hives	5
Shade trees	5
Working capital	97
Contingencies	33
Total	£P 700

The increase in the cost of establishing the newer Kvutzot is attributable not so much to the increase in land prices as to improvement in the standard of equipment and living. Figures on the annual maintenance allotments show a distinct trend towards improvement: while the average per capita allotment in 1931 was not more than £P 30 per adult, it ranged from £P 36 to as much as £P 52 in 1935.

The economic success of the Kvutza is attested in statistics published by Zionists, and is also acknowledged by outside observers, such as Sir Arthur Wauchope, Vice-President Henry A. Wallace, Walter C. Lowdermilk, and N. W. Hazen.[192] It is, however, most aptly summarized by the Registrar of Cooperative Societies in Palestine in this paragraph: "Among the remarkable achievements of postwar Palestine, few are more striking than the development of

* From *Handbook, op. cit.*, p. 28.

192 See Wauchope, *loc. cit.;* Henry A. Wallace, "The Most Exciting Enterprise," *United Palestine Appeal, 1940 Yearbook;* Walter C. Lowdermilk, "Jewish Colonization in Palestine," *The Menorah Journal*, Vol. 28, No. 3 (October-December, 1940); and N. W. Hazen, "Agriculture in Palestine and the Development of Jewish Colonization," *Foreign Agriculture* (March, 1937).

the cooperative movement by the Jewish community. The creation of an imposing economic structure by men without large means, under guidance of a handful of idealists, has an air of romance about it."[193]

Table 15, which lists income, expenses, and profits in thirteen Kvutzot for the year 1935-36, will serve to reinforce this enthusiasm with sober facts.

TABLE 15*

INCOME, EXPENSES, AND PROFITS IN THIRTEEN KVUTZOT FOR THE YEAR 1935–36

Name of Kvutza	Income (£P)	Expenses (£P)	Profit (£P)
Kefar Giladi	13,485	13,194	291
Kinneret	13,659	13,339	320
Dagania A	15,267	13,213	2,054
Kefar Gon	10,202	9,410	792
Gesher	16,539	14,211	2,328
Heftziba	10,762	9,149	1,613
Tel Yosef	25,022	24,622	400
Geva	11,941	10,613	1,328
Mizra	12,401	10,100	2,301
Ginegar	10,464	9,146	1,318
Gvat	11,374	10,266	1,108
Hasharon	7,904	7,143	761
Kiriat Anavim	15,713	15,557	156

* From *Handbook*, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

To these figures, the *1935-36 Handbook* adds: "In none of the older Kvutzot was there a loss; in 14 of the 16 newer Kvutzot there was a profit; in only two was there a loss."[194] This is supported by the findings of Hazen: "Although every Kvutza of Palestine has had to be subsidized by the Zionist Organization for a long time after its establishment, the great majority of the Kvutzot are now conducted on a self-sustaining basis, and most of them have shown substantial operating profits since 1935."[195]

As soon as the first of the Kvutzot began to show a profit, the matter of repayment of advances came to the fore and was regulated by the Foundation Fund in the year 1935, when, in connection

193 *Report of the Registrar of Cooperative Societies* (Jerusalem, 1938), p. 1.
194 See *1935-36 Handbook of the Jewish Communal Village in Palestine*, p. 26.
195 Hazen, *loc. cit.*, p. 138.

with a large loan received from the Lloyd's Bank of London, the Fund consolidated its plans for the settlements. Contracts were drawn up between the Kvutzot and the Foundation Fund, based on the following terms:

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> On the signing of the contracts the Keren Hayesod (Foundation Fund) wrote off a part of the debts (due according to its books) having regard to the normal value of the capital invested in the holdings and taking the year 1925 as the basis of such valuation, since in that year the agricultural life of Palestine entered upon a more or less steady course. Besides, in determining the amounts of indebtedness the Keren Hayesod took into account the considerable losses which the settlers sustained in the initial stages of their settlement, whether through not being granted their settlement budgets in time and in cash, which forced them to contract heavy debts, or as a result of the many difficulties inherent in such pioneering task as they had undertaken to accomplish; for, in many respects their settlement was an experiment, and it was not considered fair to impose the total cost of the experiment on these pioneers.[196]

The first repayments were due in September, 1936. A distinction was made, however, between the amounts to be paid by the Kvutzot established before 1928 and those established since then. The repayments were in general to extend over a period of fifty years and were to terminate in 1985. The more prosperous of the Kvutzot were expected to pay within a shorter time. The first repayments were made in 1936.

Ruppin states that "a very marked increase in the output of all settlements has been recorded in the last three years in Palestine." That the Kvutzot had more than their full share of this increase, is indicated in reports like that of Ben-Zvi. He states that the Kvutza provided, in 1940-41, no less than 60 per cent of all the milk and eggs consumed in Palestine (36 million litres of milk and 60 million eggs); over 60 per cent of vegetables (20,000 tons); and an even higher percentage of wheat, barley, and oats.[197]

It is interesting to note that the diversified farming practiced by the Kvutza has also helped to improve the quality of the farm products. It was instrumental in introducing fruits formerly not

[196] Ulitzur, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

[197] Shmuel Ben-Zvi, "The Collective Way," *Hashomer Hatzair* (New York, March, 1941). Also, Revusky, "Cooperatives Stand the Test," *Jewish Frontier* (March, 1942).

grown in Palestine, such as bananas, avocados, pecans, and vegetables such as asparagus, celery, artichokes.

The Kvutzists themselves, however, are proudest of their achievements in dairy farming. After years of experimentation, the best results were secured by crossing the Frisian cattle from Holland with the Syrian cow. The fodder problem was solved by the cultivation of clover, lucerne, vetches, and corn, under irrigation. Today, while the native cow yields annually about 100 to 150 gallons of milk, the new breed produces from 770 to 1,000 gallons.[198]

Similar results were achieved in poultry farming. Here the crossing of the Leghorn with the native hen produced a species resistant to the climate and surpassing the native hen threefold in yield. As Hazen attests, "Jewish dairy and poultry farming are already famed throughout the Near East." [199]

In addition to the benefit accruing to the settlements from such achievements, the value in raising the standards of the country as a whole should also be considered. To quote Hazen again: "The methods used in Jewish agricultural settlements have in some cases also been cited as fitting examples for use in nearby countries where many antiquated methods still exist. The Government of Palestine itself uses many of the agricultural methods developed by the Jewish colonists as examples for the improvement of Arab agriculture, while its experimental stations distribute to the Arab farmers large quantities of seeds and saplings acquired in the Jewish settlements." [200] The role of the Kvutza in this development is emphasized in the following statement: "From the point of view of the community the Kvutza offers all the advantages of controlled and planned mass production. It is well known in Palestine that for high-quality products, unadulterated milk, pure cream, and exotic vegetables and fruits, one can always turn to the Kvutzot. There are very few other institutions in Palestine which have acquired such a reputation or which have developed specialized farming for the market to such an extent." [201]

It may here be added that besides small-scale industry, which these settlements cultivate not only because it increases the income but also because it makes them independent of the city, the colonists have recently gone into fish production. According to

[198] Hazen, *loc. cit.*, p. 126. See also Lowdermilk, *loc. cit.*, p. 321.
[199] Hazen, *loc. cit.*, p. 143. [200] *Ibid.*, p. 144.
[201] *Report of the Registrar of Cooperative Societies* (Jerusalem, 1938), p. 80.

Ulitzur, Jewish fish production rose in 1941 "to 23 per cent of total catches and continues to progress." [202]

The achievements of the Kvutza cannot be evaluated in economic terms alone. The institution has rendered to Jewish colonization in Palestine services which can never be measured in dollars and cents. The Kvutza has proved an excellent and most economical training school for aspirant farmers of all types – of 12,272 new immigrants who registered with the Histadrut in 1939, about 4,000 were absorbed by the Kvutzot. More than that, it has proved of value as a shock absorber for Jewish colonization as a whole. Whenever an economic crisis shakes the foundations of the enterprise, the Kvutza, by taking in a substantial number of the unemployed, helps considerably to alleviate the condition.

"These services," as the Registrar states, "which the Kvutzot render to the Jewish colonizing organizations have their value and should be included in any calculations which are made of the cost of the returns of these collective settlements." [203]

The Kvutza Compared with the Smallholders' Settlement

The distinguishing feature of the Kvutza is the extreme degree of cooperation it practices. The F.S.A. cooperative farms, the Ejido, and the Kolkhoz combine, as we have seen, cooperation in production with individualism in consumption. In the Palestine community, both production and consumption are cooperative. The Communes of Soviet Russia, mentioned in Chapter VIII, are of this same type, but they have been relegated to a negligible role in favor of the Kolkhoz.

There exists also in Palestine a communal system combining cooperative and individualistic elements: the Smallholders' Cooperative Settlement. This competes effectively with the more extreme Kvutza, as indicated by resignations, from time to time, from the latter to the former. Because of their similarities, apparently the process of transition is not difficult.

The two types of settlement, in fact, show more likenesses than differences.[204] Both of them settle on national land leased under the

[202] See Ulitzur, "Palestine in Two World Wars," *Palestine and Middle East* (Tel Aviv, June, 1942). See also Dorothy Kahn Bar-Adon, "Visit to Fishermen's Villages," *Palestine and Middle East* (Tel Aviv, May, 1942).

[203] *Report of the Registrar of Cooperative Societies* (Jerusalem, 1938).

same conditions. Both forbid the hiring of labor and are based on the principle of mutual aid in work and in social relations. They aim, similarly, at a maximum of economic self-sufficiency, and they both practice diversified farming. Like the Kvutza, the Smallholders' Settlement is directed by a General Meeting of members, which elects a Managing Committee and sub-committees for the different phases of common activity. In both types the Committee expects every member to follow an accepted plan of farming, and to participate in any economic or cultural enterprise undertaken upon decision of the General Meeting. Finally, in both types the women are full-fledged members with voting power.

Although the differences are fewer, they are of a more essential nature. While there is no property in the Kvutza beyond *usufruct*, the Smallholders' Settlement is an association of individuals who are either proprietors or tenants of their holdings. With them, work outside and inside the settlement is performed individually, and every member is entitled to the full proceeds of his labor. Certain limited enterprises only, such as cultivation of given areas, irrigation, sale and purchase of products and commodities, use of agricultural machines and storage, are handled cooperatively. There exists also mutual aid in case of illness and invalidism; and the community assumes the care of children of a deceased member. But even here the principle of private property prevails. Each member is required to pay a fixed fee, not only for the specific services he receives, but as a kind of tax to cover the cost of all social services and common undertakings. Any loss arising from activities undertaken in behalf of a group of members is borne by them alone. In a word, while the women have the right to vote, and while education is managed cooperatively, the family functions as an economic unit; its traditional pattern is unchanged.

The principal advantages of the Smallholders' Community over the Kvutza, include the higher degree of privacy and the gratification of the desire for individual ownership. Yet, in spite of such benefits, the Kvutza possesses qualities that make it the superior instrument of resettlement. The relegating of every economic problem to the group practically eliminates all personal material worries. Not that the Kvutza is, therefore, a paradise on earth; conflict exists, of course, arising from personal ambitions, from friction of adverse temperaments, aggravated by lack of privacy. But whereas such drawbacks are inherent in any intimate human association,

the specific values derived from a sense of absolute personal security are unique characteristics of a cooperative community.

Let us mention only the most outstanding of its virtues. There is the social scale with excellence of work as the top value. There are the cultivation of social responsibility, of self-control, of self-discipline, and the unique sense of solidarity. As for the personal qualities developed by this way of life, note the readiness for sacrifice, perseverance in the most trying circumstances, inventiveness, and industry – qualities without which the colonization of Palestine would hardly have achieved the results it can rightly boast of today.

But it is as a socio-economic structure that the Kvutza is undeniably superior to the Smallholders' Settlement. It permits of a more efficient disposition of labor. Additional members can be admitted with practically no burden to the budget. There is above all the increased opportunity for genuine leisure, with the stimulation of social and intellectual activities which this implies. In the Smallholders' Settlement the individual is tied down to his work, and, like any other farmer shifting for himself, may hardly ever enjoy the feeling of liberty. In the Kvutza, on the other hand, once his work is done, the member is free to forget about it. If he has to get up early to milk the cows, he can make up for lost sleep while others work; if he goes on vacation, he does not have to worry about a substitute.

Another potent economic argument in the Kvutza's favor is the lower initial cost of establishment. In the period from 1933 to 1938 the cost per family in the Smallholders' Settlement amounted to between £P 750 and £P 850, as compared with £P 650 and £P 750 in the Kvutza.

In Palestine itself, the superiority of the Kvutza over the Smallholders' Settlement seems to be widely acknowledged today, as indicated by the rate of increase in each type of community. Fifty Kvutzot were established in the period from 1908 to 1936, as against thirty-six Smallholders' Settlements. But between 1936 and 1939, only nine of the latter were established as compared with twenty-six of the former. The ratio thus rises in favor of the Kvutza – about one to one and a half, in the first period, and one to three in the second.

In Conclusion

The Kvutza shares many of the dangers of the whole Zionist en-

terprise: political uncertainty; dependence on outside financing; the easily stirred hostility of the native population. It is, besides, subject to the specific dangers of every cooperative experiment, which, as Gide observes, is threatened as much by economic success as by economic failure.[205] If, however, the Kvutza succumbs to none of these, it may be assumed that, despite the competing Smallholders' Settlement, its future in Palestine is assured.

Whether in different settings, cooperative communities, modeled on the Kvutza, can achieve the same results, is the important question. In view of the many similarities between the conditions of development in the Kvutza and those to be expected in the resettlement community, the question deserves full and unbiased discussion.

[205] Gide, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

CHAPTER X

COOPERATIVE COMMUNITY OR INDIVIDUAL SETTLEMENT?

Let us first examine the nature of postwar planning. There seems to be no doubt that, once the war is over, migration will be the most desirable way out of an untenable situation for large population groups in Europe. We have, however, no way of knowing under what circumstances migration and resettlement will take place. We have no way of predicting the nature of the political organization of the postwar European states, or whether the new governing agencies will allow free movement to their subjects. But supposing that emigration be permitted, what do we know of its opportunities for resettlement? What countries will be ready to accept the seekers of new havens and under what conditions?

With so many vital factors uncertain, planning can only be exploratory. We can gather facts and point out implications, discussion of which, considering the nature of societal change, may not be futile. History shows that, drastic as some changes may have been, they have never entirely disrupted the continuity of social development. Profound as the upheavals after this war will probably be, they will not be of a kind to make all past experience worthless. Difficulties, in fact, will be apt to arise from a conservative insistence on the maintenance of the status quo, rather than from trends advocating a tabula rasa. On the other hand, the cooperative community, which, though rather widely tested between the two wars, still remains experimental, may prove particularly acceptable in the postwar era. In any event, the manner in which we think this system could be applied to the resettlement problem is presented here as predicated on a very big "if." If resettlement should take place under controlled and well-regulated conditions, if groups should be resettled in under-developed or undeveloped areas, the cooperative community which we propose would, we think, contribute largely to the success of the undertaking.

Applicable Experience

To avoid the frequent error of planning without a thorough consideration of the past, in the foregoing pages we have surveyed what appear to us significant examples of cooperative living. A brief *résumé* may be useful as a preface to our suggestions.

A basic distinction, we found, exists between the communities of the past and those of the present. In past experiments the motivation was Utopian. To both religious and socio-reformistic groups of the past, the cooperative system was not merely the preferred type of socio-economic organization; to them it was an instrument of salvation, or of radical and universal reorganization of society. Some of these communities have existed for a century or more; some are still in existence; and some have only recently expired. They have been by no means economic failures. Yet, because of their kind of motivation they have little to offer us today.

Those of a religious character, especially the Hutterites, possess many features – unified planning, the ready acceptance of strict discipline, and a high degree of economic security – which would be desirable in any society. The difficulty has been in their main purpose: they have not demonstrated that the cooperative community can really achieve salvation or over-all reform. They have hardly made any impression beyond their own limited circles. Men still go on improving methods of mutual extermination and seem further than ever from wanting "all things in common." Thus we should obviously be disregarding experience if we based our suggestions on these experiments of the past.

The modern cooperative type, on the other hand, serves purely rational purposes. It is employed as one among several measures of rural rehabilitation, as in the F.S.A. farms. Or, like the Mexican collective Ejido, it is part of a concentrated effort to improve rural standards and agricultural output. Or, finally, like the Soviet Kolkhoz, it is the main instrument of mechanization of agriculture, with subsequent increase of agricultural output and release of farm labor into industry.

The modern experiment, moreover, though by no means secure against setbacks, seems to have demonstrated the ability to achieve its aims, wherever, contrary to the experience of the F.S.A., the political system of the country, as in Mexico and Soviet Russia, is favorable to the idea. As we have seen, a change in governmental atti-

tude at one time forced even the successful Ejidos to revert to individual farming. (See Chapter VII.)

Whatever power is given to the agencies in charge of resettlement, it is clear that their authority will never equal that of the government of the country. Even were they to favor the cooperative system to the exclusion of all other types of resettlement, they would hardly be in a position to enforce its application on a scale anywhere near that achieved, for instance, in Mexico. It would, therefore, be futile to attempt to model the resettlement community on the Kolkhoz, the Ejido, or the F.S.A. farms.

It is clear, then, that neither the Utopian community of the past, because of its irrational motivation, nor the modern government-sponsored community, because of political implications, is applicable to the conditions under which resettlement will probably have to take place. But the Palestinian Kvutza is without either drawback and has proved the most successful, on the whole, of all the experiments we have surveyed.

The Kvutza has developed out of economic necessity and has demonstrated that the cooperative community is a particularly able instrument of rural rehabilitation. It has solved the problem of re-training men and women from the city, for agriculture, with less expense and better results than any other type of organization. It has proved superior in opening up swampy and eroded lands, and in breaking the ground for all other types of agricultural resettlement. It has, finally, and most significantly in view of the necessarily long-range aims of resettlement, developed into a socio-economic type which combines the advantages of rural life with the stimulation found usually only in urban centers. The Kvutza has thus created a new way of life full of deep satisfactions for an ever increasing number.

The Kvutza, as we have pointed out, is not without shortcomings. But these, except for the politically uncertain future of Jewish Palestine to which the fate of the Kvutza is bound, appear to be of a nature common to all human society. Lack of privacy, though more readily averted in an individualistic community, will always be an evil accompanying intimate association; and as long as there are human groups, cliques will form and conflicts arise from differences in temperament, from personal ambitions, from likes and dislikes.

Other Jewish Resettlements

Since we intend to model our postwar resettlement community after the Kvutza, it will be appropriate at this point to mention briefly two Jewish projects of a basically different character: the Jewish Colonization Association's settlements in Argentina, and the Sosua colony in San Domingo. Both of these aim at the rehabilitation of persecuted European Jews, by attempting to set them up as individual farmers. In every other respect, in origin, in scope of activities, in methods of organization, administration, management, and particularly in achievement, there is hardly any similarity between the two projects.

The Jewish Colonization Association, called J.C.A. for short, was founded in 1891 by Baron Maurice de Hirsch with a fund of $10,000,000, a sum which he increased by a bequest in 1896 to $50,000,000. The J.C.A. specified its objective as follows: "To assist and promote the emancipation of poor and needy Jews from any parts of Europe or Asia where they are oppressed by special restrictive laws and where they are deprived of political rights, to any other parts of the world where they can enjoy these and other rights pertaining to man. To this effect the Association proposes to establish agricultural colonies in diverse regions of North and South America, as also in other territories. . . . The end in view has always been that of assisting the colonists to purchase the plot of land they cultivate." [206]

Argentina was selected for the first such project. Administrative offices were set up in Buenos Aires in 1891, and the first colony, Moisesville, was established. There were many setbacks in the beginning, with a "considerable turnover of colonists" in the first decade. The hope of settling 25,000 the first year, and several millions eventually, had soon to be abandoned. But today the J.C.A. can be credited with definite success under the given conditions, the methods applied, and the human element involved.

The total area of land now owned by the J.C.A. in Argentina amounts to about 1,500,000 acres. Up to January 1, 1941, 1,000,000 acres have been occupied by 3,454 colonists (1,717 "land owner

[206] See Pamphlets Nos. 6 and 22 of the J.C.A. (Buenos Aires, 1942). Also J. X. Cohen, "Jewish Farmers of Argentina," *Congress Weekly* (February 7 and February 14, 1941); and Ernest Schwartz, "400 Years in Argentina," *National Jewish Monthly* (May, 1940).

colonists," plus 1,737 "colonists with contracts") who represent 3,946 families, with a total of 27,448 persons, living in 18 colonies. If the people residing in the hamlets and villages about which the J.C.A. colonies are centered are added to the number living in the colonies, the total Jewish population of the area will be over 44,000 persons.

From the very beginning those in charge of the Argentine colonization have exercised particular care in the selection of colonists. In each case, a thorough investigation of the technical, physical, and moral qualities, the composition of families, and so on, preceded admission. Attention was especially given to the agricultural preparation of the candidate. With victims of Hitler persecution an effective procedure was followed. Instead of bringing the whole family over at the same time, one of its members was sent in advance, to prepare the ground for the others. He was accepted as an apprentice to an experienced colonist, or put on a model farm attached to the Avigdor Colony, or sent to the Agricultural School in Villaguay or to a poultry farm. Thus, he could acquaint himself, within a period of three months to a year, sufficiently with the language, customs, and conditions to be allotted a plot of land and the needed buildings. These he made ready for the coming of his family. From the beginning of 1937 to December 31, 1938, a total of 175 such apprentices were brought over and established. In July, 1938, however, this system had to be given up. Only families were thereafter admitted by the General Administration of Immigration of Argentina. Agricultural training had to be given before emigration, and the farm-training centers established by German Jews at Neuendorf, at Gross Breesen, and at other places were used for this purpose. By 1941, in the seven years since Hitler's ascendancy, 398 immigrant families had been settled – 89 coming from Poland and Rumania, and 309 from Germany.

The colonists also include families of agricultural workers who have come to Argentina on their own initiative. These settlers, after having worked successfully on J.C.A. farms for a time, have been assigned to farms of their own. Sons of colonists can also become colonists in their own right after marriage.

The process of establishing a colonist on a J.C.A. farm consists of the following steps. The accepted candidate is given a plot of land varying in size, but calculated on a basis of about 190 acres of good land per family. Sums of money are advanced to him for the pur-

chase of the land as well as for the cost of installation – buildings, breeding and draught stock, agricultural implements, and other requirements – averaging a total of $3,750. A contract is drawn up between the colonist and the J.C.A. which stipulates the payment due for land taxes, and a rent calculated on the basis of 4 per cent of the land value and 5 per cent of the assessed value of the buildings. During the first five years the contract is subject to annual renewal; later the term is extended to from three to five years. Concessions are made with regard to payment of rent, but the colonist is expected to have repaid the cost of establishment within not more than eight years. On the fulfilment of this condition, and on that of having repaid 50 per cent of the land value during the same period, depends whether the promise of sale included in the first contract will be exchanged for a deed of title.

If the colonist fulfills the conditions, he receives, together with the deed, a mortgage for the balance of his debt, to be repaid in nine annual instalments, with 4 per cent interest. Thus, within a period of seventeen years, he is given a chance to come into full ownership of his farm. From then on he becomes completely independent and as much on his own as he desires.

The type of farming adopted in all J.C.A. colonies is diversified in character, and includes agriculture, stock breeding, poultry, and horticulture, as well as related processing enterprises. The main crops raised are wheat, oats, barley, linseed, maize, sunflower, and alfalfa. Cattle are raised chiefly for milk, which is sold to the market, processed into cheese in the cheese factories, or into cream in the seven cooperative creameries at Moisesville. Two of the colonies raise sheep. Each colonist also has a vegetable garden of his own. Recently, cultivation of citrus trees has been fostered.

The total value of "inventories and installations" of all the colonies was fixed, as of December 31, 1940, at $6,250,000, or an average of $1,800 per colonist. The total gross production for the period from 1938 to 1940 was estimated as follows: $3,153,652 in 1938; $3,322,937 in 1939; and $2,349,660 in 1940. This amounts to an average for each corresponding year of $889, $969, and $609 per colonist.

What these results mean in comparison to the productivity of Argentine agriculture, and to that of other resettlement enterprises, is hard to judge without a detailed study. It appears, however, from the prizes and championships won by the colonists at agricultural

shows, that they hold their own with the best of Argentine farmers. The credit for their success is undoubtedly due to the staff of the J.C.A., to the willingness of older colonists to impart their hard-won experience to newcomers, and last, but not least, to the ability of the colonists themselves.

Although the aim of the J.C.A. is to establish the colonist individually, it favors segmental cooperation among the settlers. Thus, some of the oldest and best-managed cooperatives in Argentina have developed among J.C.A. colonists. Every colony today has a cooperative society with membership extending to non-Jewish farmers of the neighborhood.

There are 70 schools in the 18 colonies, with over 200 teachers and more than 7,200 pupils. In addition to general instruction the schools stress agricultural sciences, home economics, and similar subjects.

Social life is concentrated in the "sociedados culturales y de benifencia," which devote themselves to cultural activities and to benefits such as aid to the sick, widows, and orphans; these groups have about 11,000 members. Thus, it can be said that, although the success of the J.C.A. in Argentina may be far below the dreams of Baron de Hirsch, it has "nonetheless . . . brought happiness to the thousands of Jews who now work and live on Argentine farms, and who by their labors have again demonstrated the capacity of the Jew to till the soil." [207]

If, in spite of all this, one cannot entirely recommend the J.C.A. as a pattern for postwar resettlement, it is chiefly for one reason. The J.C.A.'s methods and procedures, sound and thorough though they are, lack two characteristics which might prove essential in the postwar situation. First, their method of establishing the colonists is extremely slow; second, there is no allowance for the prompt absorption of additional settlers. These features – quick establishment, and absorption of additional colonists – are, as we have seen, precisely the virtues of the Kvutza. Therefore, and without wishing to detract from the J.C.A.'s deserved credit, we would place higher expectations on the pattern of the Kvutza than on that of the Argentine colonies.

The Sosua Colony, recently founded, appears to present a much less fortunate state of affairs than the J.C.A. colonies. This should not be a matter of concern to anyone acquainted with the history

[207] Cohen, *loc. cit.*

of resettlement projects. Success in resettlement, like success in general, depends as much on the sum total of imponderables which we call luck, as it does on perseverance in the face of adversity. Yet, there seems to be something basically wrong with this enterprise, if we accept the findings of the report made by the Brookings Institution.[208]

The Sosua Colony is the direct outcome of the Refugee Conference at Evian, France, in 1938. Representatives of thirty-two nations met there upon the suggestion of President Roosevelt, to discuss among other related problems, the possibilities of foreign resettlement for refugees from Central Europe. Only one offer of a definite character was made; it was by the Dominican Republic, which declared itself ready to admit successively 100,000 refugees.

This offer was eagerly accepted by the Refugee Economic Corporation, which, in cooperation with the Advisory Committee on Political Refugees appointed by President Roosevelt, undertook the initial investigations. Out of seventeen areas surveyed, the Committee recommended six areas for settlement. Next, the Dominican Republic Settlement Association (DORSA) was founded, with a capital of $200,000 received from the "Agro-Joint" (American Jewish Joint Agricultural Corporation, a subsidiary of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee). A contract was drawn up with the Dominican Government in January, 1940, and in May of the same year the first group of prospective settlers – 27 men and 10 women – arrived. By June 30, 1942 their number rose to 472 – of whom 104 were married, 158 were single men, 38 were single women, and 58 were children under fifteen. The total cost of establishment by July, 1941 – construction, equipment, livestock, maintenance, etc. – was $537,000, which did not include $110,000 spent on transportation of the refugees from their land of origin to the site of the colony.

On the basis of the assembled facts, the Brookings report comes to the conclusion that "current high costs constitute one of the items which create doubt as to whether refugee settlement is possible on a scale commensurate with probable need."[209] And this high

208 See *Refugee Settlement in the Dominican Republic – A Survey Conducted Under the Auspices of the Brookings Institution* (Washington, D.C., 1942). See also Revusky, "Another Project Fades Out," *Jewish Frontier* (April, 1942).

209 *Ibid.*, pp. 329 f.

cost is mainly related to the first basic mistake – that is, faulty selection of land. Surprising as it may sound, "Sosua had not been one of the areas recommended for settlement purposes by the committee of experts who visited the Republic in 1939." The Settlement Association, pressed for funds, chose the location because the 26,000 acre tract was offered free, and "because the buildings and other improvements already on the property, and its accessibility, made immediate utilization possible."

Lessons of Experience

The first basic lesson to be learned from this experience is embodied in the introductory section of the report: "The future of the colony will depend very largely upon the wisdom of its location. Land may be offered gratis by government, but there should be no hesitation in submitting the gift horse to just as careful and searching scrutiny as would be exercised if purchase were intended." Even though the motives may be honorable, gullibility in this respect may jeopardize the fate of the colonists.

The second basic lesson of the Sosua colony involves the crucial problem of all resettlement – selection of members. "Unless," decides the report, "some better basis for selecting candidates can be devised than the immediate emergency of the individual refugee, prospects of successful colonization are dubious." The "peculiar composition" of the Sosua group is, as Revusky assumes, a result largely of "the inexperience of their organizers." Here too, however, other and more creditable motives played their part. To quote the Brookings report again: "The persons whom the settlement sought to help were for the most part German and Austrian Jews, few of whom, of course, had been engaged in agriculture before the advent of the Nazi regime. An effort was made to choose colonists who had some experience which could be useful, or who seemed to have qualities necessary to success in a new pursuit and new environment. *But it was exceedingly difficult, in dealing with persons who were desperately anxious to escape from refugee camps, to obtain truthful statements or to check the information received.*" [210]

This is something to be well pondered by all those who wish to prepare themselves for the task of resettlement. Pity and compassion are worthy emotions, and it is hard to suppress them in the face

210 *Ibid.*, p. 287. Italics by present author.

of actual or threatening misery. To reject people "desperately anxious to escape" may prove harder than to ignore the lesson of experience, which teaches that poor selection can prove disastrous to the whole resettlement project. A solution may be found in some objective test, similar to industrial aptitude tests, which, within a normal margin of error, would demonstrate fitness as well as unfitness.[211] One cannot blame the organizers of Sosua for the lack of such tests, and yet, even with the limited experience available at the time, they could at least have avoided a numerical disproportion of male and female members.

Most interesting to us, however, is what the report has to say about the organization of the settlement. It finds that under prevailing conditions there can be no thought of settling the originally contemplated number of 100,000 refugees. All that might ultimately be possible, by "proceeding gradually," would be the admission of 3,000 to 5,000 immigrants. Even this, the report points out, can be achieved only if the form of settlement will become that of a "closely knit community." It is obvious that this leads at once to the recommendation of something like the Kvutza – a model which the Sosua colony, with its poorly selected group, will hardly be able to follow. It may, however, be forced into a reorganization along cooperative lines, even at the expense of a radical revamping. Such a reorganization, we are inclined to believe, may be the only salvation of the project.

211 For a suggestive outline of such a test procedure see Henrik F. Infield and Ernest Dichter, "Who Is Fit For Cooperative Farming?" *Journal of Applied Anthropology* (January-March, 1943).

CHAPTER XI

THE OFFICE OF COOPERATIVE RESETTLEMENT

We are now ready to consider the organization of the resettlement cooperative community. We shall leave to others, however, all discussion of the difficulties of emigration from one country to another, the arrangements to be made with the governments concerned, the financing of these enterprises, the selection of locations for the settlements. These problems require extensive and separate studies of their own. As our survey has shown, the cooperative is a type of socio-economic community which can be established under divergent circumstances, political as well as geographic-climatic. It is improbable, in fact, that in themselves these circumstances will exclude the possibility of establishing cooperative communities. If, after the war, there is to be controlled mass relocation of groups of people, we feel sure that those directing them will want to study closely the potentialities of this type of colonization.

One word more: as we indicated in our Foreword, we are not proposing the cooperative type as the only form of resettlement. We are as much aware of its limitations as we are of its usefulness.

With this in mind, let us present a rough outline of the basic requirements for the establishment of resettlement communities. It will require a body of experts, when the time comes, to set all the details into the framework of actual conditions.

Fundamental Requirements

There are, to begin with, the administrative requirements to be planned, differing essentially from those of individual resettlement. If the cooperative community is to be considered at all, it will be necessary to set up at the start, among the offices of the resettlement authority, a specific agency—one that we should like to call the Office of Cooperative Resettlement. This agency should be staffed by experts in the field of rural cooperation and should be

international in character, so that all available experience may be collated and utilized, and contacts with the various governments facilitated. Such experts can be recruited from among the personnel of the various agencies which have handled related problems. In the United States we shall find them among those who were in charge of the F.S.A. farms, and in the staff of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. In Mexico we may look for them among the officials of the Ejido Bank; the Soviet Kolkhoz may lend us some of their experienced administrators; and we may obtain valuable help from the leaders of the Palestine Kvutza. The officers of the Society of Friends, in charge of the American Penn-Craft Community and Work Camps, or directors of the English and Welsh resettlement projects, should also contribute their experience.

It is hard to outline in advance all the details of organization. The size of the Office will clearly depend on the scope given to cooperation within the framework of resettlement. But since cooperative communities will probably be established in more than one area, the administration should in any case be as decentralized as possible. A structure similar to that of the F.S.A. or of the Ejido Bank recommends itself, with the main office near the center of resettlement authority, and the branch offices in close contact with the settlements themselves. With this difference, however: in our case, decentralization will have to be internationally planned, with the branch or regional offices staffed largely by native experts.

The work of the Office of Cooperative Resettlement, or O.C.R., divides itself into two main tasks: (1) the securing and handling of funds; (2) the organization and supervision of cooperative communities in areas open to resettlement.

It is probable that the budget of the O.C.R. will be largely allocated from the funds of the general resettlement authority, of which the O.C.R. will be a part. But, inasmuch as the funds will probably be contributed by the several governments, it is clear that the process of appropriation will have to differ from that observed in the case of the F.S.A. or the Ejido Bank. The negotiation of the sums required will be accordingly more difficult and complicated. The O.C.R., however, may obtain financial assistance from certain private organizations, interested in cooperation, and possibly also from the general public. To secure the funds and to supervise the actual use made of them by the communities, a set-up combining

features of the Ejido Bank with those of the Zionist National Foundation would seem to be indicated as most effective in coordinating the different phases of the difficult task. This Office would attend to the financial problems arising out of the establishment and functioning of the cooperative community; it would procure the experts, supervisors, and managers needed in the initial stages of development; and it would attempt, by means of publicity and promotion, to raise financial as well as moral support for these communities throughout the civilized world.

The Stage of Preparation

Before considering the actual establishment of the resettlement cooperative, let us review the preparatory steps necessary to it – a stage of great significance. Our survey demonstrates that the fate of all the projects discussed depended decisively on the effectiveness of preparation. The principal requirements can be grouped under the headings of *selection and group formation* on the one hand, and *occupational training and re-training* on the other.

In order to cope efficiently with these needs, the establishment of rural training centers would seem to be indispensable. They would function as relay points for the whole project, and should be established, as soon as the war is over, in all countries from which emigration overseas can be expected. They could, logically, form part of the relief program of the liberated countries. In establishing these centers, use should be made, wherever feasible, of available facilities. In Germany, for instance, the agricultural retraining camps founded by the *Reichsvereinigung Deutscher Juden,* such as those at Neuendorf and Gross Breesen, which, as we have seen, were used by the J.C.A., could be taken over and enlarged. The training camps of the Hitler Youth and the German Army's training centers, equipped for the preparation of units assigned to tropical warfare, might also be utilized.

These centers should serve as test and training grounds for cooperative farming. They should, therefore, be run as much on cooperative lines as is compatible with their purpose. The position of manager, it is obvious, would have to be appointive. Strict attention should be given to his educational ability and to his genuine appreciation of cooperative practices, in addition, of course, to his experience in agriculture. Under all circumstances, the trainees admitted should have a vocal part in the conduct of affairs.

To accomplish this, the General Assembly of staff and students should be part of the administrative set-up; further, the Executive Committee should include members elected from among those in training.

Since the economic basis of these settlements will be chiefly agriculture, courses in the theory and practice of farming should form the bulk of the curriculum. If possible, the training should be organized along the principles of mixed farming in such a way as to provide at least a substantial part of the food requirements for the center. Training in handicraft or small-scale industry, that may prove helpful, must not be neglected.

While preparing the candidates for agriculture, the program could also serve as an operational test of the student's fitness for cooperative farming. There should be close observation of work performed individually or in a group, and systematic records of the manner of application should be kept. Unfortunately, little is known as yet about measuring the aptitude for cooperation. The training center would facilitate its own work and, at the same time, make a valuable contribution by administering such tests.

Few difficulties will be encountered in establishing standards for farming ability, once the problem is attacked. But selection of people for resettlement is, as all experience shows, a most crucial and least explored aspect of the enterprise. Even the most successful cooperatives, such as the Kvutzot, depend exclusively on the trial-and-error method. Although their success is chiefly due to the closely-knit group they have known how to develop, they have formulated none of this knowledge in terms applicable to groups to be established in different settings.

It is this absence of any method of selection which the Brookings Institute found especially deplorable in the Sosua settlement. The "desperate anxiety to escape," of which the report speaks, will probably harass those in charge of postwar resettlement no less than it bewildered those who had to choose the emigrants for Sosua. The only knowledge available in this field is that derived from the practical experience of cooperative communities. Consulting this, we find that a decisive role is played in all cooperative group-formation by a *strong and resistant nucleus.* Wherever such nuclei existed, in spite of all vicissitudes the groups survived. Wherever a nucleus was lacking, the group soon disintegrated. This was true in the case of groups formed by blood relation as well as those

based on religious, socio-reformistic, or other motives. The motives themselves might have had something to do with the formation of the nucleus; the decisive factor, however, was not so much the motive as the nucleus.

In spite of this realization, we still remain in the dark as to the specific factors responsible for the development of closely-knit groups. If we knew these factors, we might even produce successful cooperative groups at will. As it is, we must leave the formation of the nucleus to chance and to the operation of what we would call, with J. L. Moreno,[212] "spontaneous mutual choices." Selection of this kind occurs wherever human beings meet, and it will certainly come into play in the training centers. To be able to spot "network" formation, and to give it all the chance of growth and intensification, should, therefore, be one among the many important tasks for those in charge of the training centers. In this the techniques developed by Moreno, such as, particularly, the "sociometric and the spontaneity tests," would be of value. Certain findings of modern psychology in the study of personality, and possibly the test arrangements outlined by Henrik Infield and Ernest Dichter, particularly those pertaining to the criterion of cooperation, could assist in dealing with such problems.

212 J. L. Moreno, *Who Shall Survive? A New Approach to the Problem of Human Interrelations* (Washington, D.C.: Nervous and Mental Diseases Publishing Co., 1934).

CHAPTER XII

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMMUNITY

Instead of trying to draw a blueprint of the postwar cooperative it may be more fruitful to discuss the different aspects of its possible development. It is clear that the physical conditions of each settlement, as well as the character of the population, will vary widely. A rigid total plan can, therefore, hardly be of practical value. All we can do is to discuss the possible implications of such a community and to leave the concrete details to the action of the moment.

The first aspects of settlement to be discussed are the selection and purchase of land. It would be ideal if ethics of a new and international kind could determine the procedure. A new chapter of international relations would be opened if all land, in whatever country, could be acquired and held by the O.C.R., following the pattern set by the National Fund in Palestine. It would symbolize the coming of a new international solidarity, could the funds for such purchases be secured not only from the peoples themselves but also from the governments concerned, regardless of whether they had been friends or enemies in the two World Wars. A new and ethical kind of extraterritoriality would be established, if all the land thus acquired should be held by the O.C.R. in permanent trust.

However, feasible as the collection of funds on an international scale has proved to be, there is no expectation that the several countries will permit settlement on the basis of land purchased by foreign agencies. It will probably be necessary to give the regional offices of the O.C.R. the power of land purchase, who will then have to lease the land, for longer or shorter terms, to the association of settlers formed according to prevailing laws.

In drawing up the contract with the settlers, the regional office should take certain past experiences into consideration. A mini-

mum annual land rent, possibly 2 per cent of the value, or at least equivalent to the taxes, should be stipulated. The lease could be limited to forty-nine years, in case the group did not intend, or would not be permitted, to purchase the land subsequently. Where such intention existed and was acceptable, the contract should contain a clause providing for eventual purchase. In this case the lease might run for a shorter period of, say, five years, subject either to renewal or to exchange for a title deed.

It is to be hoped that the land selected for settlement would be the best available for the purpose. In the interest of establishing a pattern of democratic procedure and self-direction from the beginning, the particular tract of land to be assigned to a given group should be chosen with the active participation of its representatives. This may delay the procedure, but the time lost will be repaid by initiative gained.

In preparation of the land and in construction of necessary buildings, similar considerations should prevail. Leaving decisions as much as possible to the settlers themselves will produce the best results in the long run. After all, the settlers are expected to be people of the pioneer type; some initial physical discomfort should have little effect on them. The sense of active participation in organizing and building their settlement, according to their own ideas, will strengthen their attachment to the place, and their sense of responsibility for its development. A procedure somewhat similar to that used by the J.C.A. might be followed. After the land has been bought, instead of bringing the whole group of settlers over at once, several of its most active members could be sent ahead to assist in preparing the field for the others.

The Need of a Vital Motive

In our survey of cooperative communities we have found that the motives which lead to the establishment of such settlements are among the factors determining most decisively their fate. We have found that the religious creed of the Hutterites, or the sense of historic mission, like that of the Jewish pioneers in Palestine, helps to knit a group closely together, and leads to survival and success. Purely rational motives, on the other hand, like those of the socio-reformistic communities, New Llano and Sunrise, only open the way to argument, factionalism, and violent dissension. The success of a rationally motivated community seems to be possible only

where the political system of the country tends to favor the total, or at least substantial, collectivization of agriculture, as in Soviet Russia or in Mexico. Elsewhere, no such political system may exist, to sponsor the resettlement cooperatives. Accordingly, the crucial question arises as to whether a source of inspiration, like that animating the Hutterites or the Palestinian pioneers, can be provided for those who are to populate these communities.

The mere offer of economic rehabilitation will not solve the problem. There is need of some great and inspiring ideal, to elevate the culture of the resettlement community above the bare economic level and to endow the group with a sense of devotion to the cause of human development.

Such a stimulating motive might be found in the concept of international cooperation, so much talked of today. This war, more than any other event of history, has taught us that no country can isolate itself from other countries, even were it to try. It has taught us that this is one world, and that the best way to keep the world from running into new disasters is to join forces. But the main difficulty with the concept of international cooperation is that what is usually meant by "nation" is actually the "government." Governments, there is cause to fear, will never change their ways and will leave international relations to diplomats, who will remain "diplomats" even after this war. If this be true, then, cynical as it may now seem for us to say so, we can expect little progress in the conduct of international relations, and this despite the contemporary clamor for cooperation.

But international collaboration, in the final analysis will depend on the people themselves. The most elaborate organization for peace will fail, if its members represent hate and envy, and are ready to use force to gain their objectives. Though many diverse factors are responsible for wars, one of the most important is the lack of mutual understanding among the different peoples.

It is here that cooperative resettlement can find a great and stimulating motive. No literature, radio, or moving picture presentations can be so effective as personal contact and practical demonstration. Restricted in numbers, as they will necessarily remain in relation to the population among which they settle, the cooperative communities can, nevertheless, become efficient embassies of goodwill among the peoples.

The first difficulty they will have to overcome will be the hostility

of their immediate neighbors. Enterprises, such as the Cotswold Bruderhof hospital, which serves the whole neighborhood in Paraguay, can help to overcome this first difficulty. (See Chapter II.) But beyond that, contacts with the advanced groups of the country, political, cultural, or social, and collaboration with them, would bring the concept of international cooperation down from its abstract ambiguity to the level of concrete action. In their endeavor to foster genuine international ties, the cooperative communities would be helped considerably by their relation to the O.C.R. and other similar agencies throughout the world.

Membership Requirements

Before discussing the size of the group and other membership specifications, it may be helpful to point out their specific functions in the postwar world. To the cooperative community will fall the task of breaking the ground for itself and for other types of agricultural development. The success or failure of this pioneer task will, therefore, determine the basic character of resettlement.

It is obvious that in size and quality of members this community will differ from individual settlements. The alpha and omega of cooperation resides in the group. We have stressed the importance of the formation of a nucleus within each settlement, even at the stage of preparation. Some of the prospective Kvutzot were formed in Europe years before emigration to Palestine, and lived and worked, pooling their resources, for a further period in that country, before finally the National Fund gave them land to settle on. This practice has proved one of the main factors in the success of the Kvutza, and should by all means be applied to the resettlement community. Only groups which have attained a certain degree of consistency should be given land and facilities for settlement.

So prolonged a period of preparation as that customary with the Kvutza will probably be impractical, and perhaps not necessary, in the case of postwar resettlement. It would, however, be inadvisable to settle any group which has not existed in more or less identical form for at least two years. If possible, the members should have spent a year together at one of the training centers and at least another year on their own, living and managing together, pooling their income from outside work, testing themselves as to physical endurance and ability to cooperate.

The size of any individual group cannot be determined in ad-

vance, but it will be useful to consider that the most successful co-operative communities, the Hutterites and the Kvutzot, tend to limit their membership. The Hutterites prefer to branch off rather than to permit any one community to grow beyond 150 or 200 inhabitants. The first Kvutza was established by a group of ten; today some of these farms have a population of over a thousand. Yet, on the whole, here, too, the tendency is to restrict each unit to a population of not more than a few hundred persons. New Kvutzot are started with a minimum of sixty families; it was found that this number was required, to make large-scale mixed farming possible and to provide opportunity for varied and stimulating relationships.

To begin with, groups of about sixty families would probably be advisable for the resettlement community. "Family," however, should signify only the unit of one man and one woman, without children. The proportion of men to women in the preparatory stage should be equal. Couples married within the group have developed a particularly strong attachment to community life. Similarly, members whose children were born in the Kvutza have shown less tendency to leave.

The settlers will have to start life in the new country under highly severe conditions. Children will not only be a burden but will also be exposed to unpredictable dangers. Childless couples, therefore, or single members with a good prospect of mating, should be given preference. Once the group has been firmly established and feels it can assume the responsibility for offspring, it should be free to welcome its own and to accept couples with children.

Men and women between the ages of twenty and thirty-five will make the best members. No rigid policy as to age should, however, prevail, for chronological age is not always identical with psychological age, and persons who fit into the group in other respects should be admitted even if their years are above or below the preferable age limits.

Of great importance is the status of women in the cooperative community. The wife's interest and help, which have been found to be the first essential of successful farming on individual holdings,[213] constitute a far more decisive factor in cooperative farming.

[213] See Walter Wilcox and Lloyd O. G. Wand, *The Human Factor in Farm Management of Indiana Farms. Bulletin No. 369* (Indiana Agricultural Experiment Station, August, 1932).

As in the Kvutza, women should be given genuine, complete equality with men. This, it is true, implies a possible modification of the traditional family pattern and may not always appear acceptable to resettlement groups. It must, however, be realized that the more genuine the equality of women in the community, the stronger the group will become and the better its chances of survival. With a concept of eventual equality in mind, the members will find that the career woman, the one with a strong will and independent character, will be the most adequate candidate. Such a woman will have much to offer to the community, and she, in turn, will be most rewarded by participation on equal terms.

The more personality, intellectual capacity, and strength of character the members possess, the richer and more stimulating community life will be. This has proved true in the Kvutzot, 56 per cent of whose members are people with higher education. It should be true in the cooperative community for resettlement. Under normal circumstances, the problem of physical adjustment is one of morale rather than of muscular power; intelligence and steady nerves have proved more essential than a strong body.

If a member has had experience in farming or possesses a technical skill, so much the better, but this should not be an important factor. Intelligent people learn rapidly, and besides, farm experience acquired in Europe must be modified in the country of resettlement. Adaptability, resourcefulness, initiative, organizing ability, are the more significant factors in selecting members of the cooperative community.

As for financial requirements, an admission fee will hardly be relevant among the kinds of people expected to join. Most of them are likely to be completely destitute; almost none will own property worth mentioning. Resettlement will, in fact, have to be administered as a relief problem. On the other hand it would be advantageous, especially to the first groups sent out, if complete economic equality might prevail among the members. Whatever their later intentions may be at the initial stage they should pool their earnings. This would help them to manage their affairs economically, and, more than anything else, would train them in cooperation. Should anyone with property, saved by some miracle from the Nazis, decide to join, he should be expected willingly to offer what he owns to the group, either as gift or loan, or on any other terms mutually agreed upon.

After establishment of the settlement, the admission of individuals or of small groups should be subject to a probation period of at least six months. During this period, the candidate should fulfill all the duties of a member and should enjoy all privileges but that of voting. Acceptance should be decided upon by a two-thirds majority of the General Assembly. No appeal from this decision should be allowed.

Should a member, after admission, become obnoxious to the group, or should he continue to violate the disciplinary rules, every attempt should be made to adjust matters in an informal way. If persuasion and friendly admonition prove of no avail, the case should be brought before the General Assembly, and the culprit be given every opportunity to plead his cause. Only a two-thirds majority should have the right to decree the expulsion of a member.

In case of expulsion or voluntary resignation, a member should have no claim to compensation but arrangements should be made with the regional office to prevent him from being stranded in a foreign country. Should it prove impossible to find him an occupation, facilities for the return to his country of origin should be put at his disposal.

Administration and Management

A principle to be recommended in the administration and management of the resettlement cooperative is one of confidence in the capacity of the group, which has been as well selected as possible. In other words, in the light of accumulated evidence, it would be wise to restrict supervision to the absolutely indispensable minimum.

It can be assumed that little objection will be made to this recommendation. The question, however, will arise as to what constitutes the minimum in any particular instance. The government-sponsored cooperative communities, the F.S.A. farms, the Ejido, and the Kolkhoz, utilize a relatively large amount of administrative supervision and control. This may be necessary, in view of the character of the controlling agencies, but friction and conflict between the members and the administration result in all these cases. In the completely autonomous Hutterite communities, no friction can be found. The growth of the Kvutza, born out of protest against an uncongenial manager, and since then insisting on complete self-government, proves how effectively autonomy can function. These facts are worth keeping in mind.

We have assumed that the administration of the resettlement cooperative community will be centered in the Office of Cooperative Resettlement, located close to the highest administrative authority directing the whole postwar resettlement project. We have further assumed that the O.C.R. will function mainly through regional offices established in areas of resettlement, in a manner similar to that of the F.S.A. or the Ejido Bank. Besides information relative to the selection of land and the initiation of necessary improvements, the staffs of these offices would supply the central office with data concerning conditions in their particular area – the branches of farming which promise the best results; the problems of adjusting European settlers in foreign countries, and so forth. On their information the central office would base its decisions as to funds required and the type of settlers preferred. Of great importance, likewise, will be the assistance offered by the regional office to new settlers in the first period of establishment. Once a group begins to function as an agricultural settlement, the problem of management will present itself. This has proved to be of great importance in the development of cooperative communities. Where the group is composed of farmers, investing their own money cooperatively, the management is relatively simple. The man or men whom the members follow are the natural authorities to whom they look for guidance in all activities, including farming. Where, however, as in our case, the majority of members will be of urban background with only a short period of farm training, the need of supervision in agricultural matters will be urgent. It will be necessary to provide each group with a farm manager, at least during the first few years.

The careful selection of this official is vital to the whole development. Much will, of course, depend on availability of appropriate personnel. But in any case it should be kept in mind that the group is a cooperative one; even though at the initial stage it may need supervision, its final aim will always be independence and self-government. Another factor worth remembering is the progressive character of these groups, which will influence all their enterprises. Assuming, for instance, that there should be a settlement in a subtropical area where the one-crop system prevails – our group will not accept this system as binding but will attempt to establish as diversified a pattern of farming as conditions will permit. Again, the cooperative community's main concern is production for use and not for profit. The conventional manager,

however expert he may be in commercial farming, will not be the best man to be put in charge. He and the members will tend to pull in opposite directions, and friction will result. It would seem that younger persons, graduates of agricultural colleges, even with limited practical experience, but with open minds and interest in experimentation, would make the best managers. Their knowledge of agriculture, even though largely theoretical, would provide the group with the orientation they need, while concrete problems should always be solved in common, by group and manager acting cooperatively. In this way both will learn together, and there will be no occasion for friction. In fact, the best manager for a cooperative community would be one who wanted eventually to become a member of the group, or whose aim would be to liquidate his job as quickly as possible.

In all affairs not directly connected with agricultural matters and farm finances, the *groups should be completely autonomous,* and that from the start. The General Assembly of members, including all adults of both sexes, should be the supreme group authority. The Assembly should elect a board of directors, and a committee in charge of the various aspects of community life, to serve for one year; re-election to certain offices should be permitted. Disciplinary rules would have to be established but their formulation left to the members of each settlement.

The group should be encouraged to establish and keep up contacts with other groups in the same area, should they exist, and also with those in other regions. Exchange of experience, as well as of skills and knowledge, would prove of mutual benefit and would give each settlement the stimulating sense of belonging to a larger movement. Later on, should the number of settlements in different localities warrant it, they could decide to unite in an international federation. The initiative for such an organization should come from the groups themselves.

Degree of Cooperation

The basic feature of comprehensive cooperation is the decision made by a number of people to pool their resources and proceed forthwith by common action. This results in the establishment of a cooperative community, where the members not only work together and share what they produce but also live together. They will, therefore, tend to arrange their lives in such a way as to derive

the utmost satisfaction from doing things cooperatively. Different cooperative communities have had different ideas about organizing recreation, medical service, and the care of offspring. Some have been more moderate than others and, while accepting cooperation in one field, have maintained individualist features in another. Others have done away with practically every single individualist aspect of living. The F.S.A. farms, the Ejido, the Kolkhoz, and the Smallholders' Settlements of Palestine, insist on group action only in the field of large-scale agricultural production. The Hutterites and the Kvutzot, on the other hand, extend group action to every sphere of work and life.

The question as to whether the more moderate or the more extreme type of cooperative organization is preferable, becomes urgent once we begin to consider the ways in which the postwar groups are going to make a living and also make life enjoyable. Our survey of the cooperative experience of past and present should help us to answer this question on the basis of observed practice.

We have seen that conflict and dissension were particularly rife in those communities of the past which tried to combine individualist and cooperative features. New Llano and Sunrise illustrate the results of such compromise. Dissension among the members themselves, as well as between members and management, is likewise to be found in the modern settlements where distribution of goods and services are handled more or less individually. In these, however, the limitations are not due to a belief that segmental cooperation is superior to the comprehensive type. If we turn to the numerically strongest example of the modern cooperative, the Kolkhoz, we find the contrary to be true. We have already cited Stalin's opinion that the "Commune, . . . in which not only production but distribution is socialized, is actually a higher form" of society than the Kolkhoz, whose "lower" type he accepts as a momentary expedient, because it is "a simple affair and more readily understood by the broad mass of the peasants." [214]

In view of all the evidence, therefore, it looks as if the resettlement cooperative would fare best by emulating the extreme degree of comprehensive cooperation practiced in the Kvutza. Yet, it would be well to remember that the Kvutza did not spring into being from a blueprint; it is rather the result of organic growth. It started, as we have noted, like other modern cooperatives, with

[214] Stalin, *op. cit.*

profit-sharing and wage advances. These features were abandoned only because they were found to create more conflict than satisfaction. Similarly, every other individualistic practice was step by step eliminated, in the interest of simplification and of economic advantages. The Kvutza of today is thus the result of a long and steady evolution – the outcome of decisions made in the face of daily problems by minds not above the average, but who, working together, have reached solutions which no planning genius could improve upon.

It may be that this is a unique community and that its experience cannot be repeated in other settings. There is one certain lesson, however, to be learned from the Kvutza: the gauging of the degree of cooperation should be left to the community itself. The agency in charge should do no more than provide the conditions most favorable to the development of the cooperative spirit. This, together with a membership chosen for its communal ability, should produce the degree of cooperation most suitable to the group.

Whether people want to work together and share the profits according to some more or less complicated system of accounting, or prefer to forget about individual income and have "all things in common" should be left to them to decide. Similarly, it should be optional with them, whether they want to live in several large dormitories, like the Hutterites, or in separate bungalows; whether they want to cook and eat as family units, or have their meals prepared in a central kitchen and served in a common dining-hall. Finally, they should be free to arrange the purchase and distribution of clothes and other commodities in any way they think fit. Although their decisions in these matters will be significant and may influence the success of the group, it is clear that even the best program, if imposed on the members, will nullify its own merits. In these, as in all internal affairs of the group, decisions should be based on freedom of choice, limited only by the necessity of reaching a state of economic independence as quickly as possible. The supervising agency, responsible to the public for the use of its money, should, therefore, limit supervision to advice based on expert knowledge of cooperative practices.

Experience, of course, shows that whenever a group is ready to reduce expenses for consumption to a minimum and direct all its energies, mental, physical, and financial, to the strengthening of its economy, its chances for survival are proportionately improved. Since

the resettlement groups will be located in undeveloped or underdeveloped areas, their hardest test will come in the initial stage of their establishment. In coping with these early hardships they would, we think, find a source of strength in the decision to pool their resources without limitations, thus accepting the spirit of comprehensive cooperation.

Their main concern will be the improvement of the soil and the production of those crops which will yield the earliest possible income. They will be too preoccupied with this task to want to keep records of each member's amount and quality of work; they will prefer the simpler method of mutual trust. There should, however, be one unbreakable rule: under no circumstances should anyone be accepted as a member who is unwilling to put in a decent day's work. For the rest, as a hard-struggling group, they will have no time to worry about "conspicuous consumption"; each will be ready to accept in return for his work only as much of the available goods as he needs and can have, without depriving the others.

Similarly, the members will not want to squander their energies on elaborate housing facilities; a tent, a hut, satisfying a minimum of comfort and sanitation, should be all they would request. Likewise, they will want to simplify to the utmost the preparation and serving of food, by delegating the function of cook to the person best fitted, and by having their meals in common. Nor will they give too much care to their clothes, but will assign laundry and repairs to two or three members experienced in this work. Should there be children, the mother will not care for hers separately, but a trained mother will be put in charge of all children in need of supervision. In short, they will be emulating the example of the communities who have practiced comprehensive cooperation before them, and who have achieved success.

Some of these arrangements may prove too exacting in the long run, and may in part be given up later on, when the group is well established and can afford a more liberal program of consumption. Since all plans have been made by general consent, it should not be difficult to modify them when the majority of members so desire. The danger to the group, in fact, will not be that of rigidity, but rather that mentioned by Gide as the real threat to the communal experiment. Once the group achieves opulence and introduces too many individualist practices, it may, in spite of or just because of economic success, cease to exist as a cooperative com-

munity. It may turn into a stock company, as happened in the case of the Oneida Community, or it may disband.

The experience of the Kvutza shows, however, that when an extreme degree of comprehensive cooperation is developed early, in reaction to economic necessity, the system carries with it enough inherent satisfactions to sustain it in full, even after the achievement of economic success. In a word, measures resorted to because of expediency turn out to be satisfactory beyond the emergency. Perhaps something similar will happen in the case of the resettlement cooperative community. It is difficult to predict – only direct, personal experience will tell. Once comprehensive cooperation is entered into, anxieties and doubts dominating competitive society often lose their meaning, and a way of life, which formerly might have been totally unacceptable, becomes satisfactory beyond expectation.

In addition to the basic necessities – shelter, food, clothing – there are matters less urgent perhaps, but of equal concern, for which the resettlement community will have to make provisions. Among these are medical care, recreation, and, sooner or later, education.

It is hardly to be expected that the resettled groups will be able to provide for their own health requirements. Especially in the beginning, with all the heavy work in perhaps not too healthy a climate, and with all the difficulties of adjusting Europeans to tropical or subtropical areas, the need for efficient medical care will probably be urgent. This will have to be organized by the O.C.R. Physicians and hospitals must be available; nurses and dispensaries will have to be assigned to each group, equipped for first-aid and for every kind of case. As far as possible, of course, the groups should be encouraged to take care of these problems themselves; it would be of great advantage if people with medical training could be induced to join as members. But, in addition, it will be necessary to supply physicians, either by adding them to the staff of the regional offices, or independently. And as long as the number of settlements in a given region is not large enough to warrant the erection of a hospital, arrangements will have to be made with local hospitals.

The salaries of nurses and physicians, the cost of medical equipment and hospitalization, will necessarily be provided at first by the O.C.R. The groups, however, should repay the medical organization

for services, possibly on terms similar to those of the F.S.A. Medical Cooperatives or those of the Sick Fund of the Histadrut. A fee could either be deducted from advances received by the members, or paid by the group in a lump sum, calculated on the basis of a fixed fee per member.

For a cooperative community in which spiritual needs are not directed by religion, the problem of leisure time becomes of great significance and deserves much attention. It is related to the more general one of intellectual and spiritual stimulation in rural life. One of the principal reasons for migration from rural to urban districts is the dullness of country life. Lack of intellectual stimulation has been found to be especially damaging to cooperative communities composed of members from urban areas.

To counteract this danger, as we have indicated, much can be done by the proper selection of members. Those with higher education can provide many of the desired activities; they can share their knowledge, conduct courses, and raise discussion to a more fruitful level. Talents of members should be encouraged. Clubs and other groups interested in hobbies or the arts, should be given every support. Equipment such as a radio, phonograph, and, if possible, a piano, should be available in the community center of each settlement.

It is probable, however, that none of the groups will have sufficient talent to satisfy all its recreational needs. Additional facilities should then be provided by the regional office. One of the first difficulties, in most cases, will be the language, which, in the country of resettlement, will differ from the native tongue. Courses in the language of the prospective country ought to be given at the training center, but even after immigration the important task of adult education should include instruction in the new language. In this the regional office could be helpful by providing native teachers.

With the achievement of a fair mastery of the new language, visits to the moving pictures or theatre, in a neighboring town, could be arranged, lecturers could be invited, and means of exchanging ideas established with groups sympathetic to the aims of cooperation. This would tie in with what we have said about the necessity of motivation for the cooperative resettlement community. The group would not only enjoy a stimulating intellectual environment but would also enter into mutually advantageous associations with its new neighbors.

As soon as the number of children warrants it, a kindergarten and, later on, a grade school will have to be established. As in adult education, the community should try to obtain the personnel for its schools from among its members. It would probably be more economical and more efficient to train teachers than to employ outside personnel. The grade school, and the high school, as it becomes necessary, will have to shape its curriculum to the educational aims and requirements of the country, but the spirit of instruction should be imbued with the aims of cooperation.

The development of loyalty in the oncoming generation has been one of the most puzzling problems of cooperative communities. If young people are not genuinely inspired by the adult's way of life, if they find self-advancement difficult, no amount or kind of education will keep them from drifting away. Problems of education for cooperative living begin with the initial steps of establishing the community. If it is founded on a basis which allows for the development of a rich and meaningful life, the task of education will be relatively simple.

The Question of Financing

An estimate of the total funds required for the setting up of resettlement cooperative communities is hardly possible at this time. We should bear in mind, however, that there will be a difference between the cost of the cooperative division of the resettlement program and that of resettlement in general. Two points should have become clear by now: first, only a small minority of applicants will be fit for the cooperative community; second, the process of its establishment will have to be slow, with a possibility of later acceleration. The settlement of about ten groups is all that can be reasonably expected, each of about two hundred people, at the end of the third year after the war, and of some hundred thousand people at the end of the tenth year. If we accept the estimate of Myron C. Taylor, Vice-Chairman of the Intergovernmental Committee on Political Refugees, the approximate cost per settler will be $4,000; [215] and we should have to figure on a total of $400,000,000 for the ten-year period, of which a sum of $8,000,000 should be made available in the first three years.

This estimate may have to be radically revised, but it is reasonable to expect that the cost of the cooperative community will be

[215] *Refugee Settlement in the Dominican Republic, op. cit.*, p. 19.

lower rather than higher. It is logical, for example, to expect refunds from successful communities, even within the ten-year period, which will help to reduce the total sum needed. Thus, it may be said that, with a basic appropriation of from ten-to-twenty million dollars, the operations of the O.C.R. could be propitiously inaugurated. Provisions, of course, will have to be made for increasing this initial fund in the course of time.

There are three sources, as we have indicated, from which the required sums might be secured: (1) the Governmental Resettlement Authority, the establishment of which must necessarily precede all resettlement activities; (2) interested social service agencies or cooperative societies of the several countries; (3) fund-raising campaigns to be undertaken by the O.C.R. from time to time, whenever conditions warrant. In utilizing all three sources, it should be possible to secure the comparatively small sums needed for the initiation of the project. Once the first cooperatives have been established, and have demonstrated that they are able to settle the relatively largest number of people with the least initial investment, it should be easy to provide the financial support which they will deserve.

CHAPTER XIII

IN CONCLUSION

We have taken care to keep our suggestions within the frame of reference provided by past and present experience most relevant to the resettlement problem. To complete the picture we should like to cite at this point several examples of cooperative formation, here and abroad, of minor scope as compared with those treated in the first part of our study, and yet not entirely negligible.

Suggestive Experiments

First on the list are the cooperative communities established by the Welsh Land Settlement Society, a semi-governmental agency, operating in South Wales, which, in cooperation with the Monmouthshire County Council, has established since 1937 several "cooperative profit-sharing farms" for the industrial unemployed. In 1939 [216] these farms provided for approximately 150 families settled on more than 2,000 acres of land. To what extent they have been affected by the war is not known.

The acceptance of cooperative communities, in fact, as a measure promising results where individual farming falls short of required goals is not limited to the countries hitherto mentioned. A little-noticed item, recently published in the *New York Times*, under the heading, "Collective Farms for Australia," reports: "Collective farms on the Soviet model are among the new projects to increase Australian food production, described by William J. Scully, Australian Minister of Commerce." [217]

[216] See Commissioner for the Special Areas (England and Wales), *Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Land Settlement* (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1939), pp. 18 f.

[217] *New York Times* (July 9, 1943).

Possibly of less consequence than these two projects are privately organized cooperative communities. There are several such in the United States worth mentioning. The Delta and Providence cooperative farms, the first in 1936 and the second in 1938, were established by Sherwood Eddy and his associates to rehabilitate a group of Negro and white destitute families. The Delta farm, located in Boliver County, Mississippi, on 2,138 acres of land, was liquidated in 1942. But the Providence farm, which includes six white families, is still functioning, 100 miles north of Delta, near Cruger, Mississippi, on 2,888 acres.

A slow but steadily developing project of the modern cooperative type is the Macedonia Cooperative Community, established on 820 acres in 1937, near Clarksville, Georgia, by Dr. Morris Mitchell, Professor at Alabama State Teachers College. This settlement consists so far of only five families, but they form a compact nucleus for developing a larger group.

Also of interest is Saline Valley Farms, established in 1932 by Harold S. Gray, on a tract of 596 acres in Washtenaw County, Michigan, near the village of Saline. In 1941, twenty families, about half of them with urban background, lived at Saline Valley Farms. They had developed a smoothly functioning community out of which a genuine cooperative settlement can be expected to grow.

Among other attempts on the part of private initiative is the Celo Community, organized in 1937 by Arthur E. Morgan, at Celo, 50 miles northeast of Asheville, North Carolina, on 1,200 acres. In 1941 the project included six families. The Community Service, Inc., an organization whose purpose is "to study and to further the interests of the community as a basic social institution," has recently been added to the project.

Such enterprises as The Catholic Worker's Farms and The Rural Cooperative Community Conference tend to develop some of the characteristics of a social movement. These organizations try to coordinate the attempts of as yet very small groups, often not more than one or two families, to establish cooperative communities. The central organ of the first organization is the *Catholic Worker*, a periodical initiated by Peter Maurin and published by its editor, Dorothy Day, in New York City. The Conference issues *The Communiteer*, published by Stephen and May Leeman at Teaberryport, New City, New York.

In 1937, near Uniontown, Pennsylvania, the American Friends

Service Committee set up an "experimental community for the rehabilitation of unemployed and partially employed coal miners." Although the mine boom created by the war has arrested its development at practically the level of a self-helping housing project, the experiment is worth recording because of the close attention to the problem of selecting members. A "work test" and other methods of careful selection are said to have reduced turnover to a minimum.[218]

A development, likewise, very similar to The Rural Cooperative Community Conference, seems to be taking place in Canada. In March, 1943, a Canadian Fellowship for Cooperative Community was founded in Toronto by Professor Henri Lasserre, President of the Robert Owen Foundation of Toronto. The purpose is to coordinate all the private cooperative community enterprises of Canada.

The Vital Role of Selection

Having reached the end of our considerations, we should stress again the fact that we do not look upon the cooperative community as a panacea. There is no reason why postwar resettlement should not avail itself of various methods. But, as demonstrated in various countries, the modern, realistic cooperative type has proved itself capable of attaining two important goals: the rehabilitation of the destitute farmer and the modernization of farming. It has also helped to raise the cultural standards of rural life. These are the achievements we have attempted to point out in our study, and they should be highly relevant to any resettlement undertaking. Moreover, while the traditional ways of settlement are well known, the potentialities of cooperative groups, though more fully recognized in recent years than commonly realized, need emphasis.

In the practical application of the principle of comprehensive cooperation, we cannot underline too often one vital condition of its usefulness. Not everyone is fit for life in the cooperative community. Where the organization is kept on a strictly voluntary basis, as will be the case in postwar resettlement, only a relatively small proportion of emigrants will be willing and fit to join. The experience of Palestine illustrates this point. Jewish immigration, though at times under pressure by powerful forces, was on the

218 See Eaton and Katz, *op cit.*, for bibliography on cooperative communities. See also Eaton, *op. cit.*, Chapter XXIV, pp. 195 f.

whole voluntary and only in certain aspects controlled. A Chalutz, once he had landed, was free to choose between industry, office work, and other fields such as architecture. If he went into farming, he could choose between individual and cooperative farming. The Palestinian situation exemplifies what happens when a free choice of occupation is permitted.

According to statistics compiled for 1940, of about 450,000 immigrants to Palestine, 142,000 had settled in rural districts. Of these, 20,000 persons lived in the Kvutzot and about 18,000 in the cooperative Smallholders' Settlements. Thus, if we add together the two types of cooperative settlements, we have something like a third of those who settled in rural districts living in cooperative communities. If we take the Kvutza alone, its members, living under conditions of extreme comprehensive cooperation, comprise only a seventh of the total rural and about a twentieth of the whole immigrant population.

The satisfactory functioning of the cooperative settlements of Palestine can be taken as indicating that they are run by people well equipped for the task. This, as we have seen, results from the process of selection, of attracting the fit and rejecting the unfit – a process of prolonged trial and error. Unfortunately, the Kvutzot have not developed any objective technique of selection applicable to groups forming in other settings. Since the problem of resettlement will differ from that of the Zionist Organization, in that it will have to deal with a human element less strongly conditioned by an inspiring idea; and since further, postwar resettlement will hardly be able to leave as much to trial and error, the need of effective methods of selection will be vital to the success of the cooperative community.

Much, if not everything, will depend on the ability of the O.C.R. in spotting that seventh or third of all immigrants, willing to settle in rural districts, who may be genuinely fit for cooperative life. As previously stated, we have so far developed only a suggestive outline for objective tests. Intensive experimental research is needed to replace this outline with concrete and valid techniques. We close therefore with the strong recommendation that such research be undertaken at once. The more so, as this is the one preparatory action open to us while the war is still being fought.

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